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Pioneering

...in Cuba

By

JAMES M. ADAMS





June 2nd 1891.

Dear Mr. Brewster,

Yours of the 1st inst.

has been received.



JAMES M. ADAMS.

PIONEERING IN CUBA

*A NARRATIVE OF THE SETTLEMENT OF
LA GLORIA, THE FIRST AMERICAN
COLONY IN CUBA, AND THE EARLY
EXPERIENCES OF THE PIONEERS*

BY

JAMES M. ADAMS

ONE OF THE ORIGINAL COLONISTS

Illustrated

CONCORD, N. H.:

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TO
MY FELLOW COLONISTS

**WHOSE COURAGE, CHEERFULNESS, AND KINDLY SPIRIT WON MY
ADMIRATION AND AFFECTION**

**THIS BOOK IS
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED**

PREFACE.

My excuse for writing and publishing this book is a threefold one. For some time I have strongly felt that the true story of the La Gloria colony should be told, without bias and with an accurate, first-hand knowledge of all the facts. My close relations with the colony and the colonists, and an actual personal residence in La Gloria for nearly half a year, have made me entirely familiar with the conditions there, and I have endeavored to present them to the reader clearly, correctly, and honestly. Secondly, I have been imbued with the belief that many of the daily happenings in the colony, particularly those of the earlier months, are of sufficient general interest to justify their narration; and if I am wrong in this, I am quite sure that these incidents, anecdotes, and recollections will find an attentive audience among the colonists and their friends. It is one of the author's chief regrets that the size and scope of this book does not admit of the mention by name of all of the colonists who were prominent and active in the life of the colony. Thirdly, while in La Gloria, in his capacity as a member of the Pioneer Association, the author had

the honor to be the chairman of the committee on History of the Colony. This committee was not officially or outwardly active, but in a quiet way its members stored up history as fast as it was made. The author does not dignify the present work by the name of history, but prefers to call it a narrative of the first year of the colony. He believes, however, that it contains many facts and incidents which will be found useful material to draw upon when in later years a complete history of the first American colony in Cuba may be written.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. V. K. Van De Venter, a professional photographer of Dundee, Michigan, for some of the best pictures in the book. The other photographs were taken, and in several cases kindly furnished gratuitously, by Robin H. Ford, John H. Rising, L. E. Mayo, and W. G. Spiker. I am also under obligation to Mr. Spiker for the loan of the cut of the lake on the Laguna Grande tract, and to Dr. W. P. Peirce for the use of the cut of his pineapple garden in La Gloria. All of the pictures in the book are scenes in the province of Puerto Principe, and with two or three exceptions, in or around La Gloria.

J. M. A.

North Weare, N. H., December, 1900.

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PIONEERING IN CUBA.

CHAPTER I.

ARRIVAL OF THE COLONISTS IN NUEVITAS HARBOR.

JUST after noon on January 4, 1900, the ancient city of Nuevitas, Cuba, lazily basking in the midday sunshine, witnessed a sight which had not been paralleled in the four hundred years of its existence. A steamer was dropping anchor in the placid water of the harbor a mile off shore, and her decks were thronged with a crowd of more than two hundred eager and active Americans. They wore no uniforms, nor did they carry either guns or swords; and yet they had come on an errand of conquest. They had fared forth from their native land to attack the formidable forests and to subdue the untamed soil of the province of Puerto Principe—a task which required scarcely less courage and resolution than a feat of arms might have demanded in that locality two years before. Well aware

that there was a hard fight before them, they were yet sanguine of success and eager to begin active operations. It was the vanguard of the first American colony planted in Cuba.

The vessel that lay at anchor in the beautiful land-locked harbor of Nuevitas was the screw steamer *Yarmouth*, a steel ship which, if not as fast and elegant as the ocean greyhounds that cross the Atlantic, was large and fine enough to have easily commanded the unbounded admiration and amazement of Christopher Columbus had he beheld her when he landed from the *Santa Maria* on the coast of Cuba near this point more than four centuries ago. Great changes have been wrought since the days of Columbus in the manner of craft that sail the seas, but less progress has been made by the city of Nuevitas in those four hundred long years. The *Yarmouth*, substantial if not handsome, and safe if not swift, had brought the colonists to this port without mishap, thus redeeming one of the many promises of the Cuban Land and Steamship Company. Since early morning the vessel had been slowly steaming along the palm-fringed coast of the "Pearl of the Antilles," daybreak having revealed the fact that the boat was too far to the eastward, and

late in the forenoon we entered the picturesque bay of Nuevitas, took on a swarthy Cuban pilot, and, gliding quietly past straggling palm-thatched native shacks and tiny green-clad isles, came to anchor in plain view of the city that Velasquez founded in 1514. We had passed two or three small circular forts, any one of which would have been demolished by a single well-directed shot from a thirteen-inch gun. These defenses were unoccupied, and there was naught else to threaten the established peace.

The day was beautiful, freshened by a soft and balmy breeze, with the delightful temperature of 75 degrees. Far back in the interior, through the wonderfully transparent Cuban atmosphere, one could see the light blue peaks of lofty mountains, standing singly instead of in groups, as if each were the monarch of a small principality. Their outlines, as seen at this distance, were graceful and symmetrical, rather than rugged and overpowering like some of their brother chieftains of the North. Near at hand the listless city of Nuevitas extended from the water's edge backward up the hillside of a long, green ridge, the low, red-tiled houses clinging to what seemed precarious positions along the rough, water-



CITY OF NUEVITAS, CUBA.

worn streets that gashed the side of the hill. To the right a green-covered promontory projected far into the bay, dotted with occasional native shacks and planted in part with sisal hemp. The colonists on shipboard, ignorant of the appearance of this tropical product, at first took the hemp for pineapple plants, but soon learned their mistake from one who had been in the tropics before. Viewed from the harbor, Nuevitas looks pretty and picturesque, but once on shore the illusion vanishes. Mud meets you at the threshold and sticks to you like a brother. The streets, for the most part, are nothing more than rain-furrowed lanes, filled with large, projecting stones and gullies of no little depth. Sticky, yellow mud is everywhere, and once acquired is as hard to get rid of as the rheumatism. The houses, in general, are little better than hovels, and the gardens around them are neglected and forlorn. When a spot more attractive than the others is found, Nature is entitled to all the credit. The shops are poor and mean, and not over well supplied with merchandise. The natives, while kindly disposed toward the "Americanos," are, for the most part, unattractive in dress and person. The few public buildings

are ugly and there is not a pleasant street in the town. And yet when seen from the harbor the city looks pretty, mainly on account of its red-tiled houses, grassy hillside slopes, and waving cocoanut palms. The author of the ancient saying that "distance lends enchantment to the view," might well have gathered his inspiration at Nuevitas.

If the inhabitants of Nuevitas have the quality of curiosity, they clearly did not have it with them at the time of our arrival. Although it is said on good authority, that the city had never before had more than twelve or fifteen visitors at one time, save soldiers or sailors, the natives betrayed no excitement and little interest in the advent of two hundred American civilians. With the exception of a handful of boatmen and a few fruit vendors, not a person came to the piers to gaze at the new arrivals, and in the town the people scarcely gave themselves the trouble to look out of their open dwellings and shops at the colonists. This may have been inherent courtesy—for the Cuban is nothing if not courteous—but to us it seemed more like indifference. The Cubans are certainly an indifferent people, and at this port they appeared to have no object or interest in life.

They dwelt in drowsy content, smoking their cigarettes, and doing their little buying and selling in a leisurely and heedless manner. The most of them pick up a precarious living with but little labor. These easy-going habits impress the close observer as being more the result of indifference than downright indolence, for when the occasion demands it the Cuban often exhibits surprising activity and industry. He does not, however, work for the fun of it, and it never occurs to him that it is necessary to lay up anything for the proverbial "rainy day." Accustomed to the fairest skies in the world, he never anticipates cloudy weather.

It is quite possible that if we had been arrayed in brilliant uniforms, resplendent of gold lace, brass buttons, and all the accompanying trappings, we should have aroused more interest, for the Cuban loves color, pageant, and martial show, but as a matter of fact, nothing could have been plainer and uglier than the dress of most of the colonists. To the superficial observer, there was nothing about the invaders to hold attention, but to me, who had closely studied my companions and fellow-colonists for nearly a week, they were full of interest and inspiration.

They were, to be sure, a motley crowd, representing many states and territories, and several grades of social standing, but they were obviously courageous, enterprising, and of good character. In point of intelligence and manifest honesty and energy they averaged high—much higher than one would expect of the pioneers in a project of this sort. They were not reckless and unscrupulous adventurers, nor yet rolling stones who sought an indolent life of ease, but serious-minded and industrious home-seekers. They had counted the cost, and resolved to go forward and achieve success, expecting obstacles, but not anticipating defeat. A thoughtful person could not fail to be impressed by the serious and resolute manner in which these voyagers entered upon the work of establishing a new home for themselves in a tropical country. Since the days when the Pilgrim Fathers landed upon the bleak shores of New England, I doubt if a better aggregation of men had entered upon an enterprise of this character.

The colonists sailed from New York on the *Yarmouth* on Saturday, December 30, 1899, a stinging cold day. It was the first excursion run by the Cuban Land and Steamship

Company, whose offices at 32 Broadway had for several days been crowded with men from all parts of the country eager to form a part of the first expedition to establish an American colony at La Gloria, on the north coast of Cuba, about forty miles west of Nuevitas. Every passenger on board the *Yurmouth* was supposed to have purchased or contracted for land at La Gloria, and practically all had done so. The steamer was commanded by Capt. E. O. Smith, a popular and efficient officer, and carried besides her complement of crew and waiters, two hundred and eleven passengers, all men with one exception, Mrs. Crandall, the wife of an employé of the company. The colonists represented all sections of the country, from Maine to California, from Minnesota to Florida. No less than thirty states sent their delegations, two territories, Canada, Prince Edward's Island, and British Columbia. All came to New York to make up this memorable excursion. The genial and stalwart Gen. Paul Van der Voort of Nebraska, who was commander-in-chief of the national G. A. R. in 1882-'83, had led on a party of over twenty from the West, several of them his own neighbors in Omaha. The others were from different parts of



GEN. PAUL VAN DER VOORT.

Nebraska, Kansas, and Iowa. General Van der Voort was the assistant manager of the company, and a little later became its president. He went to Cuba in the double capacity of an officer of the company, to take charge of its business there, and a colonist to make La Gloria his permanent residence. Honest, affable, and humorous, a magnetic and convincing speaker, with a sunny nature singularly free from affectation and ardently loyal to his friends, General Van der Voort was a natural leader of men, well fitted to head a colonizing expedition. One of his sons had been in La Gloria for some time working as a surveyor in the employ of the company.

General Van der Voort's party, however, formed but a small fraction of the Western representation. Twelve men came from Illinois, six from Michigan, five from Minnesota, four from Wisconsin, four from Indiana, four from Oklahoma—men who were "boomers" in the rush for land in that territory—two from Missouri, two from Washington state, one from Wyoming, one from South Dakota, and one from California. Ohio men, usually so much in evidence, were hard to find, only one man on board ac-

knowledging that he hailed from that state. The South was not so largely represented as the West, but there were two men from Maryland, two from Virginia, two from Georgia, one from Florida, one from West Virginia, and one from Washington, D. C. New York state led the entire list with fifty-one. Pennsylvania and Massachusetts came next with twenty-one each. From New Jersey there were fifteen. Among the New England states, New Hampshire and Connecticut followed Massachusetts, with five each. Rhode Island contributed four, Maine two, and Vermont two. Two of the colonists hailed from British Columbia; one from Prince Edward's Island, and one from Toronto, Canada. The latter, a tall, good-looking Englishman by the name of Rutherford, cheerfully announced himself as "the only Canuck on board." Those who were fortunate enough to become intimately acquainted with this clear-headed and whole-hearted gentleman were easily convinced that while he might call himself a "Canuck" and become a Cuban by emigration, he would remain to the end of his days an Englishman, and a very good specimen of his race. If Rutherford had not taken part

in the "sugar riot"—but that's "another story."

The colonists represented even more occupations than states. There were four physicians, one clergyman, one lawyer, one editor, one patent office employé, small merchants, clerks, bookkeepers, locomotive engineers, carpenters, and other skilled mechanics, besides many farmers. There were also a number of specialists. The embryo colony included several veterans of the Spanish war, some of whom had been in Cuba before. G. A. R. buttons were surprisingly numerous. The men, generally speaking, appeared to be eminently practical and thoroughly wide awake. They looked able to take hold of a business enterprise and push it through to success, regardless of obstacles. Several of the colonists showed their thrift by taking poultry with them, while an old gentleman from Minnesota had brought along two colonies of Italian honey bees. Another old man explained his presence by jocularly declaring that he was going down to Cuba to search for the footprints of Columbus. Accents representing all sections of the country were harmoniously and curiously mingled, and the spirit of fraternity was marked. The

one colored man in the party, an intelligent representative of his race, had as good standing as anybody.

The voyage down was uneventful. It occupied four days and a half, and for thirty-six hours, in the neighborhood of Cape Hatteras, very rough water was encountered. But few on board had ever known such a sea, and sickness was universal. The discomfort was great, partly owing to the crowded condition of the boat. Many a hardy colonist sighed for his Western ranch or his comfortable house in the East. The superior attractions of Cuba were forgotten for the moment, and there was intense longing for the land that had been left behind. It is a fact hard to believe that several on board had never before seen the ocean, to say nothing of sailing upon its turbulent bosom. With the return of a smooth sea a marvelous change came over the voyagers, and all began to look eagerly forward to a sight of the famed "Pearl of the Antilles." We were now sailing a calm tropical sea, with the fairest of skies above us and a mild and genial temperature that was a great delight after the severe cold of the Northern winter. The salubrious weather continued through the

remaining forty-eight hours of the voyage, and the colonists resumed their interrupted intercourse, having but a single subject in their eager discussions—always the prospects of the colony or something bearing on their pioneer enterprise. The topic was far from being talked out when we glided into the tranquil harbor of Nuevitas.



CHAPTER II.

THE JOURNEY TO PORT LA GLORIA.

THE newly arrived colonists found the Spanish word "mañana" still in high favor at Nuevitas, though it was difficult to fix the responsibility for the irritating delays. The Cubans and the officers of the company alike came in for a good deal of straight-from-the-shoulder Yankee criticism. Some of this was deserved, but not all. The company's officers had been handicapped in many ways, and for this and perhaps other reasons, had not pushed things along as rapidly and successfully as the colonists had been led to expect. It was learned that the town of La Gloria was as yet only a town in name, the foundation of its first building, the hotel, having just been laid. The lumber for the structure lay on the docks at Nuevitas. The company's portable sawmill machinery was rusting in the open air at the same place. If the colonists marveled at this, their wonder disappeared when, a little later, they tramped and waded the four miles of so-called "road"

that lay between Port La Gloria and La Gloria "city." Nothing daunted by these discouraging signs and the many unfavorable reports, the most of the colonists determined to push ahead.

Arriving at Nuevitas Thursday noon, January 4, the passengers of the *Yarmouth* were not allowed to leave the vessel that day or evening. Many were desirous of exploring the ancient city of Nuevitas, but the most frequent and anxious inquiry was, "When shall we be taken to La Gloria?" It was a hard question to answer, and no one in authority attempted to do so. There were several causes contributing to the delay, one of which was the customs inspection and another the question of transportation. Communication between Nuevitas and La Gloria was neither easy nor regular. The overland route was the nearest, about forty miles, but could only be utilized by a person on foot or horseback. At the time of our arrival this way was entirely impracticable by any mode of travel. The inside or shallow water route was about forty-eight miles long, and the outside or deep water course, sixty miles. The officers of the company decided upon the latter as the most feasible, and set out to procure lighters

to convey the colonists and their baggage. This was no easy matter, as the business had to be done with Cubans, and Cubans are never in any hurry about coming to terms.

Friday morning the passengers of the *Yarmouth* were permitted to go ashore and wake up the inhabitants of the sleepy city, each person paying some thrifty Cuban twenty-five cents for transportation thither in a sailboat. The Cuban boatmen coined money during our three days' stay in Nuevitas harbor. So also did the fruit venders, who came out to the steamer in small boats and sold us pineapples, tiny fig bananas, and green oranges at exorbitant prices. The fruit looked inferior, but the flavor was good. Most of it grew without care, and in a semi-wild condition. The colonists were eager to sample any fruit of the country, as most of them were intending to make fruit growing their business. The "Americanos" succeeded in waking up Nuevitas in some degree, and at night a few of them set out to "paint the town red." Only a few, however; the great majority behaved remarkably well. The day was spent in quietly inspecting the city and its surroundings. Many of the visitors bought needed supplies at the small stores.

Saturday was passed in the same way as Friday, the only incident of note being a small-sized disturbance which took place at the pier near midnight. Three belated Americans, who had done more than look upon the "aguardiente," got into a quarrel with a Cuban boatman in regard to their return to the *Yarmouth*. The Americans were mainly at fault, the boatman was obstinate, and a war of words was soon followed by blows. The boatman was getting the worst of the scrimmage when several of the Cuban police swooped down upon the party. Two of the Americans drew revolvers, but they were quickly disarmed and overcome, one of the trio, who wore the uniform of the United States army, which he had lately quitted, falling over into the harbor in the scuffle. This sudden and unexpected ducking ended the fight; the "Americanos" compromised with the boatman, and were allowed to return to the *Yarmouth*. These intending colonists did not remain long at La Gloria, although one of the three purposes to return. The conduct of the Cuban police upon this occasion, and upon all others which came under my notice, was entirely creditable. They dress neatly, are sober and inoffensive in

manner, and appear to perform their duties conscientiously and well.

While we lay in Nuevitas harbor we received several visits from Gen. A. L. Bresler and the Hon. Peter E. Park, president and resident manager, respectively, of the Cuban Land and Steamship Company, both of whom had been stopping in the city for some time. They had acquired the Cuban dress and, to some extent, Cuban habits. Mr. Park decided to accompany the colonists to La Gloria, and to share with them all the hardships that they might encounter on the journey. It was no new thing for Mr. Park to make the trip. He had made it slowly along the coast in a small sailboat; he had made it in quicker time in a steam launch, and he had sometimes gone overland on horseback, struggling through mud and water and tangled vines, swimming swollen rivers and creeks, and fighting swarms of aggressive mosquitoes in the dense woods. He knew exactly what was before him; the colonists did not. General Bresler, strange to say, had never been at La Gloria.

It was on Sunday afternoon, at a little past one o'clock, that the colonists finally got away from Nuevitas and made the start for La

Gloria. The fleet consisted of three small schooners loaded with light baggage, a little freight, and nearly two hundred passengers. Two of the boats were Nuevitas lighters, with Cuban captains and crew, while the third was a schooner from Lake Worth, Florida, carrying about twenty colonists from that state. This boat, known as the *Emily B.*, had arrived at Nuevitas a day or two before the *Yarmouth*. Among her passengers were four or five women. The heavy baggage of the *Yarmouth* colonists was loaded upon yet another lighter, which was to follow later.

The colonists embarked upon the sailing craft from the decks of the *Yarmouth*, leaving behind a score or more of their number whose backbone had collapsed or who for some other reason had decided to return home immediately. It is, I believe, a veritable fact that more than one of the intending colonists went back on the same boat without so much as setting foot on the soil of Cuba. Probably examples of the "chocolate éclair" backbone are to be found everywhere. One of the returning voyagers was a tall, thin man of middle age, wearing a long, red, sorrowful face. It had been apparent from the very start that his was an aggravated case of

home-sickness. He had shown unmistakable evidence of it before the *Yarmouth* had even left North river, and he did not improve as the vessel approached the coast of Cuba. He rarely spoke to anybody, and could be seen hour after hour kneeling in a most dejected attitude upon a cushioned seat in the main saloon, gazing mournfully out of the window at the stern across the broad waters. His was about the most striking example of sustained melancholy that ever came under my observation, and could not seem other than ridiculous in that company. When we slowly moved away from the *Yarmouth*, I was not surprised to see this man standing silently upon the steamer's deck. The look of unillumined dejection was still upon his face. A man whose face does not light up under the subtle charm of the Cuban atmosphere is, indeed, a hopeless case, and ought not to travel beyond the limits of the county wherein lies his home. There were others who remained behind on the *Yarmouth* for better reasons. Mr. and Mrs. Crandall returned to New York because the company's sawmill, which he was to operate, had not been taken to La Gloria and was not likely to be for some time to come. Mrs. Crandall was the only woman passenger on

the voyage down and had been fearfully seasick all the way. Orders had been given that no women or children should be taken on this first excursion, but an exception was made in the case of Mrs. Crandall because she was the wife of an employé of the company.

The departing colonists waved their good-bys to the *Yarmouth*, and the little fleet was towed out to the entrance of Nuevitas harbor, about ten miles, when the schooners came to anchor and the tugboat returned to the city. Although it was but little past three o'clock and the weather fine, the passengers learned to their dismay that the boats had anchored for the night. The furrowed-faced old captain would take no chances with the open sea at night and so would proceed no farther. "Tomorrow—four o'clock—wind right—go!" he said, with a dramatic gesture and what seemed to the colonists an unnecessarily explosive emphasis on the last word.

The boats were anchored in the narrow entrance to the harbor, where the smooth-running tide closely resembled a river. On one bank, one hundred yards away, were an old stone fort and a few Cuban shacks. Some of the passengers were desirous of going ashore to see the fort and the houses, but

neither entreaties nor bribes could force the old Cuban captain to allow the use of his small boats. The Cubans are fond of waiting and cannot appreciate American restlessness. So we were obliged to sit quietly and gaze wistfully at the green-clad shore. As night came on, it was found that loaves of bread and large chunks of salt beef constituted the larder. It was poor fare, but the colonists accepted the situation cheerfully and broke bread and ate as much of the greasy meat as they could.

It was a radiant evening, with soft, caressing breezes and a starlit sky of incomparable beauty. Many of the voyagers saw the famed Southern Cross for the first time and gazed at it long in silent contemplation, overcome by that delicious feeling of dreamy content which takes possession of one in the tropics. On one of the boats, religious services were held, conducted by a Georgia clergyman, the Rev. A. E. Seddon of Atlanta, one of the most enthusiastic and uncomplaining of the colonists. The singing of hymns was joined in by many of the eighty-seven passengers on the boat, and prayers were offered by no less than four individuals. It was a singularly impressive scene, not altogether unlike what took place on board the *Mayflower* centuries before.

The peaceful evening was followed by a night of great discomfort. The passengers were crowded together, and many slept, or attempted to sleep, on boxes, barrels, or the lumber which formed a part of the cargo of the schooner. I slept, at intervals, on the lumber designed for the hotel at La Gloria. Often had I slept in hotels, but this was my first experience in sleeping *on* one. Some of the passengers on the schooners sat up all night in preference to lying upon boxes and lumber. We were not, however, without entertainment during that long, wearisome night. We had a philosopher among us, in the person of quaint old Benjamin Franklin—of Griffin's Corners, New York—who talked earnestly and eloquently upon his appalling experiences in Confederate military prisons many years before. The handful of soldiers of the Spanish war were modestly silent in the presence of this gaunt old veteran of the great civil strife. Judge Groesbeck, of Washington, D. C., quoted poetry and told anecdotes and stories, while the Rev. Mr. Seddon, Dr. W. P. Peirce of Hoopeston, Ill., and others, contributed their share to the conversation. As we became drowsy, we could hear, now and again, some one of our com-

panions giving an imitation of the Cuban captain: "To-morrow—four o'clock—wind right—go!"

Early in the morning, true to his word, the captain set sail, and as the wind was right



AN INVOLUNTARY BATH.

good progress was made. One of the diverting incidents of the morning was the fall of the captain overboard. In the crowded condition of the boat, he lost his footing and went over backward into the water. He scrambled back again in a hurry, with a look of deep

disgust upon his rather repulsive face, but the inconsiderate "Americanos" greeted him with a roar of laughter. One enterprising amateur photographer secured a snapshot of him as he emerged dripping from his involuntary bath. A little later one of the Cubans caught a handsome dolphin, about two feet and a half long. The crew cooked it and served it up at ten cents a plate. As our schooner, drawing five feet of water, entered the inlet about fifteen miles from the port of La Gloria, she dragged roughly over the rocky bottom for some distance and came perilously near suffering misfortune. The other schooners came in collision at about this time and a panic ensued. No serious damage resulted, however. It was between twelve and one o'clock that afternoon that the port of La Gloria was sighted.

CHAPTER III.

A TOUGH TRAMP TO LA GLORIA CITY.

As the fleet of schooners drew near La Gloria port, a row of small tents was discerned close to the shore. Elsewhere there was a heavy growth of bushes to the water's edge—the mangroves and similar vegetation fairly growing out into the sea. Between and around the tents was a wretched slough of sticky, oozy mud nearly a foot deep, with streams of surface water flowing over it in places into the bay. The colonists were filled with excitement and mingled emotions as they approached the shore, but their hearts sank when they surveyed this discouraging scene. They landed on the rude pier, and after much difficulty succeeded in depositing their light baggage in tents reserved for the purpose. Narrow boards laid down to walk on were covered with slippery mud, and some lost their footing and went over headforemost into the slough. One jaunty, well-dressed young man from New Jersey, who had found the trip vastly entertaining up to this point,

was so disgusted at suffering a "flop-over" into the mire that he turned immediately back and returned to his home in Atlantic City. And so the sifting process went on among the intending colonists.

The conditions at the port at that time were certainly most unpleasant. Mud and water were on every hand, and sand flies were as thick as swarms of bees, and nearly as ferocious; they allowed no one any peace. The company had considerably provided coffee and bread for the landing "immigrants," and something of the sort was certainly needed to fortify them for what was to follow. Lunch over, such of the colonists as had not decided to turn back started for the "city" of La Gloria, four miles inland. We found that the electric cars were not running, that the 'bus line was not in operation, and that we could not take a carriage to the hotel; nor was there a volante, a wagon, a bullock cart, a horse, mule, or pony in evidence. Neither was there a balloon or any other kind of airship. We learned further that a row-boat could be used only a portion of the way. Under the circumstances, we decided to walk.

The road, if such it may be called, led



PORT LA GLORIA.
Photograph by V. K. Van De Venter, Jan. 25, 1900.

through an open savanna, with occasional belts of timber. There had been heavy rains just before our arrival, and the trail was one of the most wretched ever followed by a human being. For about a quarter of a mile there was an apology for a corduroy road, but the logs composing it were so irregular and uneven in size, and had been so disarranged by surface water and so nearly covered with debris that it all seemed to have been placed there to obstruct travel rather than to facilitate it. After the corduroy, the trail was a disheartening mixture of water, mud, stumps, roots, logs, briars, and branches. Now we would be wading through shallow water and deep mud that almost pulled our shoes off; then splashing through water and tall, coarse grass; and again, carefully threading our precarious way among ugly stumps, logs, and fallen limbs, in water above our knees. At times the traveler found himself almost afloat in the forest. He was lucky, indeed, if he did not fall down, a misfortune which was little less than a tragedy. Before leaving the port we had been advised to remove our stockings and roll our trousers above our knees. Few of us had on anything better than ordinary shoes, and the

sensation of tramping through the mud and water with these was far from pleasant. Many had rubber boots or leggings in their trunks, but the trunks were still at Nuevitás.



AUTHOR ON ROAD TO LA GLORIA. (*Jan. 8, 1900.*)

Notwithstanding the bad road, one hundred and sixty stout-hearted colonists set out for La Gloria between 1:30 and 3 o'clock. They straggled along for miles, old men and young men, and even lame men; some with valises,

some with bundles, and many with overcoats. In the lead was Peter E. Park, the Detroit lawyer who for months had been acting as the Cuban manager for the company. His stalwart form was encased in a suit of white duck, and he wore a broad, slouch hat and high, leather boots. He looked quite picturesque as he strode through the mud and water, apparently trying to impress the colonists with the idea that the poor road was nothing to justify making a fuss. Inwardly, no doubt, he was somewhat sensitive on the subject of the road; justly or unjustly, the colonists blamed him for its condition.

It was hot and hard work, this four-mile walk under a tropical sun, but the men bore it with a good deal of patience. I started with a pair of rubbers on, but was compelled to abandon them before getting far, leaving a large amount of rich Cuban soil in and on them. The scene which presented itself was unique and interesting. All sorts of costumes were worn, including some young fellows in soldiers' uniforms, and there was no little variety in the luggage carried. Some staggered under very heavy loads. Quite a number of cameras and kodaks were to be seen. The trail led through a rich savanna, soil

which is undoubtedly adapted to the raising of sugar cane, rice, and cocoanuts. Many palmetto and palm trees lined the way. One could not well view the scenery without stopping, for fear of losing one's footing. Thorns were troublesome and easily penetrated the wet shoes of the weary travelers. The colonists all agreed that this road was the freest from dust of any they had ever trod.

At last, after two hours of toil and discomfort, we came in sight of dry land and the camp. We had crossed two small creeks and seen a few unoccupied native shacks. No part of the land had been cultivated. Many of us had seen for the first time close at hand the majestic royal palm, which is deservedly the most distinguished tree in the island. It is a tree without branches, crowned at the top of a perfectly straight shaft with a bunch of long, graceful, dark green leaves. The royal palm rises to a height of sixty, seventy, and even eighty feet, its symmetrical shape and whitish color giving it the appearance of a marble column. It bears no fruit, and affords little shade, but it is highly ornamental and forms a striking feature of the landscape. The tree often lives to be two hundred years old; it has twenty leaves, one of which is shed about

once a month. It has been stated that the seeds from a single tree will support one good-sized hog.

As we approached our destination we passed two buxom women sitting on a huge stump. They were clad in shirt waists, belted trousers and leggings, and wore broad hats of a masculine type. We silently wondered if this was the prevailing fashion among the women of La Gloria, but soon found that it was not. Even the pair that we had first seen came out a few days later in dainty skirts and feminine headgear. Indeed, we found La Gloria, in some respects, more civilized than we had anticipated.

It was late in the afternoon of Monday, January 8, 1900, that the one hundred and sixty members of the first excursion to establish the first American colony in Cuba, reached the camp which occupied the site of La Gloria city of to-day. We found about a dozen tents, and as many more native shacks occupied by Cubans who were at work for the company. The Cubans numbered about fifty, and the American employés nearly as many more. There were also a few Florida and other settlers who had reached the spot early. Altogether, the population just before



COL. THOMAS H. MAGINNISS.

our arrival was about one hundred, seven or eight of whom were women.

The white city grew rapidly after we appeared on the scene. The company had tents, which we were obliged to put up for ourselves, and it was several hours before we had opportunity to even partially dry our wet feet and shoes. All that evening little groups of barefooted men could be seen gathered around camp-fires, drying themselves and their clothing. The distribution, location, and erection of the tents was placed in charge of Col. Thomas H. Maginniss of Philadelphia, Pa., an ex-officer of the United States regular army and a veteran of the Civil War, who had come down among the colonists on the *Yarmouth*. Colonel Maginniss was a handsome man of great stature, youthful in appearance, mentally alert and physically active, with very prepossessing manners. Although a little past fifty years of age, he looked to be hardly more than forty. He was a favorite from the start, and aside from being a picturesque personality, soon became an influential power among the colonists. So efficiently did he perform his duties in supervising the erection of the tent city, that a little later he was regularly given the position of superintendent of

camp, in the employ of the company. He held this post until his return to the States, early in April.

Our first night in La Gloria was not one of sybaritic pleasure. We were able to secure some poor cots and one thin blanket apiece. This was insufficient, for the nights, or rather the early mornings, were quite cold. Some of the men were obliged to sit up all night to gather warmth from fires. The rotten cloth on the cots went to pieces, in most cases, before the night was over, and, altogether, sleep was at a premium. Many of the tents were crowded; in mine were eight persons, representing nearly as many states. Fortunately, the insects gave us very little trouble. The population of the camp that first night must have been nearly three hundred, and the next day it increased to quite that number.

While the colonists did not arrive at La Gloria in any considerable numbers until January, 1900, the preliminary operations began there on October 9, 1899, when Chief Engineer J. C. Kelly landed with a survey corps from Texas. It was a splendid corps of bright, hardy, plucky, indefatigable men, skilful in their work and under discipline as

rigid as that of an army. Chief Kelly was from Eagle Lake, Texas, in which state he had become well known through the performance of a great deal of important work. He was an exceedingly capable engineer, a strict but just disciplinarian, a good financier, and at all times highly popular with his men, whose devotion to him was as striking as that often shown by soldiers to their colonel or their general. Mr. Kelly was an interesting talker, and an athlete and amateur impersonator of no mean pretensions. With him he brought, as assistant chief, Mr. H. O. Neville, a well-educated, versatile, and agreeable young man. Among the others in the Texas party were Sam M. Van der Voort, son of the general, and I. G. Wirtz, both of whom later became instrument men. S. H. Packer, also of Texas, was one of the corps. From New York came F. Kimble and J. A. Messier, the latter familiarly known as "Albany," and from Havana, B. B. Lindsley, all three serving later as instrument men more or less of the time. All the men above mentioned were efficient surveyors and good fellows, each something of a "character" in his way. Among other early arrivals, most of whom were attached to the survey corps, were O. V.

De Long of Havana, H. L. Starker of Chicago, David Porter of Detroit, Richard Head of Florida, J. A. McCauley of New York, Will Corlett, and Jack Griffith.

The experiences of the members of the survey corps at La Gloria had been a continued story of hardship, privation, and exposure. They came in before the rainy season had ended, pushing their toilsome way through tangled vines and thorny thickets, wading through mud and water, and often being compelled to swim swollen creeks. Much of the time they patiently worked knee deep or waist deep in water, covered with swarms of mosquitoes or other pestiferous insects. Often they had little to eat save cornmeal "mush" and boniatos (sweet potatoes); but for all this, they were seldom ill and rarely made a complaint. Sleeping in their wet clothes, which would not dry in the dampness of the night, they were up early each morning ready for another day's attack upon the jungle. The fact that they were not more often sick is the best testimonial to the healthfulness of the climate of northeastern Cuba that has come under my notice. It speaks volumes, especially when it is known that a little later men from the

Northern states, and even British Columbia, worked on the survey corps under similar conditions and with like immunity from serious illness. Occasionally, to be sure, they would be poisoned from standing too long in water or coming in contact with the güao tree, or shrub, but this affliction, while severe, was never fatal. The good work faithfully and uncomplainingly performed by the survey corps in and around La Gloria, under such trying circumstances, is worthy of as much praise and admiration as a successful military campaign. It required courage, skill, and patient endurance to move upon and tame this tropical forest on the north coast of Cuba.

A handful of colonists followed the survey corps into La Gloria at intervals, the first ladies coming in December. These were Mrs. D. E. Lowell and Mrs. W. G. Spiker; they came with their husbands. Mr. Lowell had been a prosperous orange and pineapple grower in Florida until the great freeze came, and Mr. Spiker was a successful photographer in Ohio before leaving his state to find him a new home in the tropics. The Lowells and Spikers were intelligent and cultivated people who had been accustomed to a good style of

living, but who were now ready to undertake a rough, pioneer life in the strong hope of a bright future. The party landed at Palota, northwest of La Gloria, and came in with horses and wagon of their own, following the roughest kind of trail for the larger part of nine miles. It was a hard and perilous trip; only with the greatest difficulty could the horses draw the load through the heavy mud and over the deeply gullied road. More than once the team seemed hopelessly stuck, but was extricated after a time and the toilsome journey continued. At last the bedraggled party reached La Gloria, and the first women colonists set foot on the soil of the future Cuban-American city. When the *Yarmouth* colonists arrived, the Lowells and Spikers had been living at La Gloria for several weeks; they were well and happy, and pleased with the climate and the country.

CHAPTER IV.

FIRST DAYS IN THE NEW COLONY.

THE first few days after our arrival we led a strange and what seemed to many of us an unreal life. Shut into a small open space by a great forest, with no elevation high enough for us to see even so much of the outside world as hills, mountains, or the sea, it almost seemed as if we had dropped off of the earth to some unknown planet. Day after day passed without our seeing the horizon, or hearing a locomotive or steamboat whistle. We had no houses, only tents, and there was not a wooden building of any sort within a dozen miles. At night the camp was dimly lighted by flickering fires and the starry sky, and through the semi-darkness came the hollow, indistinct voices of men discussing the outlook for the future. There were always some who talked the larger part of the night, and others who invariably rose at three o'clock in the morning; this was two hours before light. In the deep forest at night were heard strange sounds, but high

above them all, every night and the whole of the night, the harsh, complaining note of a certain bird who seemed to be eternally unreconciled to the departure of day. I think it was a bird, but it may have been the wail of a lost soul.

It was lonesome there in the wilds of Cuba in those early days of the new colony, and doubtless there was some homesickness, but the reader should not gain the impression that the pioneers were downcast and unhappy. On the contrary, they were delighted with the climate and the country, despite the difficulties encountered in entering it and the deprivations which had to be put up with. From the first, the colonists, generally speaking, were more than cheerful; they were happy and contented. Buoyant in spirits, eager to explore and acquire information concerning the surrounding country, they enjoyed the pioneer life with the keenest relish. They laughed at the hardships and privations, made friends with each other and with the Cubans, and tramped the woods and trails with reckless disregard of mud and water and thorny underbrush. The men were astonished to find themselves in such excellent health; the more they exposed

themselves, the more they seemed to thrive, until nearly every man in the colony was ready to say that he was better physically and mentally than when he left home. It was the same with the women, whose improved health, entire cheerfulness, and evident contentment were a revelation to the observer. There are many women who take as readily to a pioneer life as do the men. This was notably the case in La Gloria.

The colonists had not come to La Gloria in search of a health resort—at least, the great majority had not—but that is what they found. Scarcely had we set foot on the soil of Cuba when those of us who had catarrh—and what Yankee has not?—found that we no longer suffered from the affliction. This cure, which proved permanent, was something the majority of us had not counted on. Nor had we counted on the entire freedom from colds which we enjoyed in the island. But the cure of catarrh was of small importance in comparison with the sudden and marked improvement in those who suffered from nervous diseases. It is not too much to say, that many found the soothing Cuban climate a specific for such disease which they had not dreamt of in their philosophy. Those

with kidney ailments and rheumatism reported themselves improved, and there was not wanting evidence that persons with consumptive tendencies and other weaknesses would find the air salubrious and a residence in this part of the island beneficial.

The temperature at this time was delightful, a close approach to perfection, the thermometer ranging from 70° to 84° at noon, and rarely falling below 60° at any time of day. It still rained frequently, an unusual and remarkable prolongation of the rainy season, which ordinarily ends in November, but the water fell in brief showers and left the rest of the day bright and clear. Indeed, it was not until February that the rain ceased altogether and the dry season fairly began. The Cubans declared that they had never known the wet season to continue so late.

The long continued rains were held responsible, perhaps justly so, for many of the inconveniences and drawbacks which the colonists encountered. The company stoutly declared that to these unusual meteorological conditions was due the failure to build the road to the port which had been promised, and that the absence of the road prevented the transportation of the lumber for the con-

struction of the hotel. This latter assertion was true beyond all question. The "hotel" was a subject of much comment and immoderate mirth. It existed on paper in spacious and imposing elegance; it was a splendid structure of the imagination. But let it not be thought for one moment that the hotel was wholly a myth. Not so; the situation would not have been half so funny if it had been. There stood the foundation for the immense building squarely across Central avenue, about a quarter of a mile back from the front line of the town. A large space had been cleared in the forest, and the centre of this opening was the hotel site. The foundation consisted of large logs of hard wood, sawed about four feet long and stood upright. They were set in cement on stone that was sunk slightly below the surface of the ground. How many of these logs there were I cannot say, but there was a small army of them, aligned across Central avenue and extending far to either side. Under the dim light of the stars they looked like a regiment of dwarfs advancing to attack the camp. Workmen were putting the finishing touches on this foundation when we arrived, but the work was soon discontinued altogether, leav-



"THE HOTEL."

Photograph by V. K. Van De Venter, Jan. 23, 1900.

ing the wooden army to serve as an outpost of slowly advancing civilization. Of course, we always directed new arrivals to the "hotel" as soon as they came in over the "road" from the port! After a while we became so fond of the hotel joke that I think we should have been sorry to see the building completed.

The bad road to the port also cut off all chance of getting the sawmill up to La Gloria, and it daily became more evident that we should continue to dwell in tents for some time to come. We were destitute enough during those first days in the colony. Our trunks had not come, and did not for several weeks, and many of us were without change of clothing or even a towel. We washed in a small creek which ran through the Cuban camp, wiping our hands and faces on handkerchiefs. This and other creeks served us well for drinking water, and there was also an excellent spring on the company's reserve north of the town. Very little freight could be brought up from the port, and hence it was that we were not over-well supplied with provisions. There was usually enough in quantity, but the quality was poor and there was a painful lack of variety. The

engineer corps' cook house was hastily enlarged into a public restaurant upon our arrival, and did the best it could to feed the hungry colonists. Some of the latter boarded themselves from the start—purchasing what supplies they could get at the commissary—and perhaps had a shade the best of it.

I shall never forget my first supper in La Gloria. It was at the company's restaurant. We were crowded together on long, movable benches, under a shelter tent. Before us were rough board tables innocent of cloth. The jejines (gnats or sand flies) swarmed about us, disputing our food and drink and even the air we breathed. The food was not served in courses; it came on all at once, and the "all" consisted of cold bread without butter, macaroni, and tea without milk. There were not even toothpicks or glasses of water. Amid the struggling humanity, and regardless of the inhumanity of the jejines (pronounced by the Cubans "haheens"), my gentlemanly friend from Medfield, Mass., sat at my right and calmly ate his supper with evident relish. He was fond of macaroni and tea. Alas! I was not. At home he had been an employé in an insane asylum. I, alas! had not enjoyed

the advantages of such wholesome discipline. Of that supper I remember three things most distinctly—the jejines, my friend's fondness for macaroni and tea, and the saintly patience and good-humor of our waiter, Al Noyes.

It was not long before there was an improvement in the fare, although no great variety was obtainable. We usually had, however, the best there was in camp. The staples were salt beef, bacon, beans, and sweet potatoes or yams, and we sometimes had fresh pork (usually wild hog), fried plantains, and thin, bottled honey. We often had oatmeal or corn meal mush, and occasionally we rejoiced in a cook whose culinary talent comprehended the ability to make fritters. The bread was apt to be good, and we had Cuban coffee three times a day. We had no butter, and only condensed milk. It was considerably later, when I ate at the chief engineer's table, that we feasted on flamingo and increased our muscular development by struggling with old goat. If it had been Chattey's goat, no one would have complained, but unfortunately it was not. Chattey was our cook, and he kept several goats, one of which had a pernicious habit of hanging around the dining tent. One day,



THE SPRING,

Photograph by V. K. Van De Venter, Jan. 23, 1900.

just before dinner, he was discovered sitting on a pie in the middle of the table, greedily eating soup out of a large dish. Chattey's goat was a British goat, and had no respect for the Constitution of the United States or the table etiquette which obtained in the first American colony in Cuba. The soup was dripping from Billy's whiskers, which he had not even taken the trouble to wipe. It is certain that British goats have no table manners.

But I am getting ahead of my story. The condition of the road to the port was so bad for some time after our arrival that it was barely possible to get up sufficient provisions to supply the daily needs of the camp, to say nothing of other freight. We were in need of almost everything to furnish our tents or to begin agricultural operations. There was, to be sure, the "commissary," where the company had confidently assured us in its advertising literature "every necessary article from a plough to a knitting needle" would be on sale "at the most reasonable prices." As a matter of fact, the commissary was almost as bare as the famous cupboard of old Mother Hubbard, and of the commodities that were stored there, very few seemed to be for sale to the colonists. After several ineffectual

attempts to get what I wanted, I entered the commissary tent one day to make a test case. Of Mr. Richardson, the man in charge, I blandly inquired :

“ Can I get a tin pail? ”

“ No,” with a gentle shake of the head.

“ Can I get any kind of a pail? ”

“ No,” with another shake.

“ Can I get a tin pan or a wash basin? ”

“ No,” with a shake.

“ Can I get a tin dish or an earthen dish or a wooden dish? ”

“ No,” with more shakes.

“ Can I buy a tin cup or an earthen mug? ”

“ No,” with a vigorous shake.

“ Can I buy a knife, fork, or spoon? ”

“ No, no,” with two quick shakes.

“ Can I buy a piece of cloth of any kind? ”

“ No, sir,” stiffly.

“ Can I buy an empty box? ”

“ No, sir, you can't—need 'em all ourselves.”

“ Is there anything that you have got to sell? ” I inquired meekly.

“ Well, there is some mosquito netting over there.”

I had mosquito netting—but mosquito netting did not make a very good drinking

utensil. I left the commissary without inquiring for a plough or a knitting needle.

The population of La Gloria fluctuated greatly during the first week after our advent. Our arrival and the additions of the following day had brought the total population of the camp up to at least three hundred. The wet and muddy trails, and the backwardness of all improvements, increased enormously the feeling of distrust among the colonists, and some began to loudly question the security of titles. This alarm, which ultimately proved to be entirely unfounded, kept the camp in a ferment for a day or two. Oceans of discussion were indulged in, Mr. Park was closely and warmly questioned, and there was a general feeling of uneasiness and unrest. The result was that when the last half of the week had begun, La Gloria had suffered a loss of nearly one hundred of its population. Discouraged and disgusted men made their way back to the coast, hoping to get transportation to Nuevitas, and thence back to their respective homes. There was a delay at Port La Gloria, and a few remained there until they had made up their minds to return to the camp. The others went on to Nuevitas, but were unable

to secure transportation at once to the States. The consequence was that nearly or quite one half eventually returned to La Gloria, straggling in from time to time.

As the week drew to a close the town quieted down, the restless spirits having departed. Those of us who remained either had faith in the ultimate success of the project, or were at least disposed to give the enterprise a fair trial. We were not easily stampeded; and we placed some reliance on Senator Park's positive assurance that the deeds would be all right. We saw, of course, that the company's affairs had been badly managed, and that promised improvements had not as yet materialized, but, on the other hand, we had learned from personal observation that the land was good, the timber valuable, the drinking water pure and abundant, and the climate delightful beyond description. The most of those who returned to the States with harrowing tales either never got as far as La Gloria at all, or else spent less than forty-eight hours in the camp. The majority of the colonists cheerfully stuck by the colony, and laughed at the untruthful and exaggerated newspaper stories as they were sent down to us from the frozen North.

CHAPTER V.

THE ALLOTMENT OF THE LAND.

THE chief of the immediate problems which confronted the colonists and the officers of the company was the allotment of the land. The company had purchased it, or secured options on it, in large tracts, some of these tracts containing over ten thousand acres each. The colonists had contracted for it in small holdings, varying from a town lot, 25 x 100 feet in size, to a forty-acre tract of plantation land. No more than forty acres were sold to any one on a single contract. The contracts which could be made were, respectively, as follows: Town lots, three sizes, 25 x 100 feet, 50 x 100, and 50 x 150; plantation land, $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres, 5 acres, 10 acres, 20 acres, and 40 acres. The purchaser paid in full or on monthly instalments, as he preferred, being allowed a discount of ten per cent. for cash. According to the terms of the contracts, he did not purchase the land at all, but bought stock in a coöperative company and the land was a gift to him. However,

the coöperative company feature was always in the background in the mind of the colonist, and he felt that he was buying the land and almost invariably so termed the transaction. It was the land he had his eye on, and his present anxiety was to have a good piece promptly allotted to him.

At the company's headquarters in New York, no plan of subdivision had been formulated further than a general promise in advertising circulars to allot the land in the order of the numbers of the contracts. At first glance, this seemed both fair and feasible, but once on the ground at La Gloria, some very formidable difficulties loomed up. Of the four or five thousand persons who had invested up to that time less than three hundred were at La Gloria, and there was not in Cuba even a list of the people who had made contracts with the company, to say nothing of their respective holdings and the status of their payments. No such list could be obtained from New York under several weeks or perhaps months, and when obtained would be of little value for the reason that there could not possibly be land enough surveyed by that time to allot one half of the thousands of investors. Surveying in this dense tropical forest was neces-

sarily slow work, and progress had been impeded by the long-continued rains.

It was manifestly impossible to make a general allotment of the land at once, and yet it was essential that the colonists who had actually arrived on the spot should be given their tracts promptly and permitted to go to work upon them. The life of the colony seemed to hinge on action of this sort. Quite early the company had stated that the subdivision would be made about January 1, and when General Van der Voort arrived in New York in the latter part of December, he assured the colonists who were preparing to sail with him to Cuba that they should have their land by January 15. This promise was carried out to the letter, and was the only rational course of action that could be pursued under the existing circumstances. It undoubtedly saved the colony at what was a critical stage. During the voyage down, the colonists on board the *Yarmouth* were greatly exercised over the method of allotment; that is to say, many of them were, while others declared that they would be satisfied if they only got their land promptly. General Van der Voort gave the subject much anxious consideration, seeking to devise a plan which

should be at once just and practical. He finally decided that the fairest and best thing to do was to place the matter in the hands of a committee of the colonists, giving them the power to prescribe the method of allotment within certain limitations, subject to the approval of the colonists on the ground. The general described this as the "town-meeting" principle, and his decision gave entire satisfaction to the pioneers.

General Van der Voort arrived in La Gloria Thursday, January 11, having remained behind at Nuevitas to see the baggage of the colonists through the custom house. This accomplished, he took passage for La Gloria on board the lighter carrying the trunks, etc. The voyage was not a smooth one. The boat came near being wrecked in the rough sea, and suffered the loss of its rudder. Finally an anchorage was effected about a dozen miles from the La Gloria shore, and General Van der Voort and others were taken off in a small boat. The trunks and other baggage were not landed until nearly a week later, and it was several weeks before much of the luggage reached La Gloria city. The contents of many of the trunks suffered serious damage

from water and mould, although in some cases the things came through entirely uninjured.

General Van der Voort rode from Port La Gloria to the camp on horseback, a hard trip, for the road had not improved. The mud and water and debris made it a slow and exhausting journey. He assumed charge of the company's business in the colony at once. Arrangements were made for a prompt allotment of the land, and a committee of nine colonists, with Dr. W. P. Peirce of Hoopes-ton, Ill., as chairman, was chosen to devise a plan of distribution. After several prolonged sessions, the committee unanimously reported a scheme by which those present should select their land from the official map in the order of the priority of their purchases. After these, the investors having authorized representatives on the ground, the latter holding powers of attorney, were to have their chance. In this second class, also, priority of purchase governed the order of selection. The report further provided that the investor should be allowed a second choice if he found his land to be unsatisfactory. This plan, which I believed then and believe now was the best that could have been devised, was adopted by the colonists with but a single dissenting vote.

On Saturday, January 13, the allotment began, in what was known as headquarters tent. The committee which had formulated the plan of distribution was in charge, assisted by Chief Engineer Kelly, Architect Neff, and others. The town lots were given out first, and by night nearly all who were entitled to make selections in these classes had been served. The town lot distribution was completed Monday morning, the 15th. The town was one mile square, and had been laid out and surveyed under the supervision of M. A. Custer Neff, civil engineer and architect. It was traversed and counter-traversed by streets and avenues, appropriately named. These were as yet, for the most part, only surveyors' paths cut through the forest, but they were much used as thoroughfares to reach town lots and the plantation lands beyond. They were rough roads, filled with mud, water, stumps, stubble, and roots, but with the advent of the dry season they became more easily passable. The highway running through the centre of the town to and from the coast was known as Central avenue, and the road passing through the centre at right angles was called Dewey street. Around the intersecting point, the exact centre of the town,

space had been reserved for a large plaza. Central avenue and Dewey street were each designed to be one hundred feet wide, and were naturally the paths most used by the colonists. The former actually extended from the rear line of the town northward to the bay, five miles away, while the latter continued from the side lines of the town out into the plantation lands to the east and west. The town site was well chosen. It has a fair elevation above the sea, a firm, hard soil, with steadily rising ground. The front line of the town is about twenty feet above tidewater; the centre about one hundred feet, and the rear line nearly or quite two hundred feet. Around the town was a belt of land a quarter of a mile wide reserved by the company; then came the plantations on every side.

When the committee finished the allotment of town lots on the morning of January 15, it was found that nearly five hundred lots had been taken up out of a total in all classes of about three thousand six hundred. The colonists had not been slow in selecting corner lots, and the lots on Central avenue and those facing the plaza on all sides were early pre-empted. The colonists had faith that a real city would rise on the chosen site. When the

demand for town lots had been satisfied, the committee began at once to give out the plantation land. The choice was necessarily restricted to about eight or ten thousand acres to the west, southwest, and northwest of the town, which was all that had been surveyed up to that time. When this condition was discovered by the colonists, the unsurveyed land to the north, south, and east began, naturally enough, to appear far more desirable in the eyes of the investors than that which had been surveyed to the westward, and some refused to make a selection at all, preferring delay to a restricted choice. The great majority, however, mindful that they were privileged to change if the land was not satisfactory, went ahead and made their selections. As a matter of fact, the surveyed tract to the westward was probably as good as any, all of the land held by the company being rich and highly productive.

The first man to choose his plantation was Dr. W. P. Peirce of Hoopeston, Ill., who, it so chanced, was chairman of the committee on allotment. Dr. Peirce's contract was No. 2, and it was dated in January, 1899. But few contracts were made before April of that year. Contract No. 1 was not on the ground,

and no one present knew who was the holder. The allotment was well conducted, and went on quite rapidly. It was eagerly watched by a large group of interested spectators, impatiently awaiting their turn. Some tried to extract inside information from the surveyors, who were supposed to know the relative value of every square foot of the land, but the majority either made their choice blindly, with knowledge of nothing save the proximity of the tract to the town, or trusted to the meagre information they had acquired regarding the character of the land in different localities during their tramps in the few days since their arrival.

It was a strange scene. Men of all ages and occupations, coming from nearly every one of the United States, and several other countries, strangers until a few days before, were crowded together in a large tent, each anxious to do the best possible for himself, and yet in few instances discourteous to his neighbor. It was a good-natured, well-behaved crowd, and there was no friction in the proceedings. The colonists were satisfied that the plan of allotment was a fair one; there was no complaint about anything except the restricted choice. Monday night saw the



ROBERT C. BEAUSEJOUR.
(*One of the Early Colonists.*)

allotment well advanced, and Tuesday it was finished. Everybody then on the ground who wished to make a selection for himself or those whom he represented had been accommodated, and the committee's duties were at an end. Nearly seven thousand acres of plantation land had been allotted.

As soon as they had selected their land from the map the colonists scurried out into the surrounding country to find it. The woods were full of men hunting their plantations. It was no easy matter to find them, since there was nothing to go by but the numbered stakes of the surveyors. These were anything but plain guides to the uninitiated, and even the more understanding were sometimes baffled by reason of indistinct figures or missing stakes. The result was that many viewed other people's land for their own, while some, conscious of their helplessness, gave up the search for the time being. The majority, however, found their land with no more difficulty than was inevitable in a long tramp through the rough and muddy paths of a jungle. The mosquitoes kept us company, and the parrots scolded us from overhead, but there were no wild beasts or venomous snakes to be dreaded. Probably there are no

tropical forests in the world so safe as those of Cuba ; one may sleep in them night after night without fear of death or disease. This is true, at least, of the country within a radius of forty miles from La Gloria, as I can testify from personal experience and observation.

In most cases the colonists were pleased with their land when they found it, and the changes were comparatively few. A little of the lowest land was more or less under water, but even this was rarely given up, the holders discovering that it was very rich, and realizing that it would be all right in the dry season, and that it could be drained for the wet. Some experienced men from Florida showed a decided preference for this land, and later it developed that their judgment was good. This lowest land was of black soil ; that slightly higher was apt to be yellow, and the highest red or chocolate. All these different colored soils were embraced in the allotment which had been made, and they all represented good land. The colonists could never agree as to which was the best. Undoubtedly some were superior for certain purposes to others, but all appeared to be fertile and gave promise of being very productive. The black and yellow soils were almost entirely free

from stone, while the red and chocolate had some, but seldom enough to do any harm. The colonists set to work with energy clearing their town lots, and a few began work at once on their plantations. The colony was soon a busy hive of industry.



CHAPTER VI.

THE SUGAR RIOT.

AFTER the middle of January and the beginning of the allotment of the land, the population of La Gloria began to "pick up" somewhat. Colonists who had been lingering at Nuevitas, and some new ones who had come down from the States by the Munson line, would straggle in from time to time. People were coming and going almost every day, but the balance was in favor of the colony and the population slowly but surely increased. Among the new arrivals were quite a number of women and children. About January 20 the advance guard of the colonists who had come on the second excursion of the *Yarmouth* made its appearance. On this trip the *Yarmouth* brought about sixty passengers, the majority of whom finally got up to La Gloria. More would have come if Nuevitas at that time had not been a hotbed of misrepresentation regarding conditions in the new colony. All the unfavorable features were grossly and ridiculously exaggerated,

while stories of starvation, sickness, and death were poured into the ears of new arrivals until many an intending colonist became convinced that it would be taking his life in his hand for him to make even the briefest visit to La Gloria. Such is the tendency of human nature to exaggerate, and to build a big sensation out of a small nucleus.

People who had never seen La Gloria were the ones whose representations seemed to be most credited in the States and by the new arrivals therefrom. I saw a letter received by one of the company's officials at La Gloria from a woman in Asbury Park, N. J., who was nearly crazed by anxiety for her youngest son, who was then in the colony. She had heard frequently from her oldest son, who had been in La Gloria with the survey corps for several months, and he had always written very favorably of the place, so she said, but she had lately seen an Asbury Park man who had returned from Nuevitas and he had told a terrible story of suffering and danger in the colony. The woman's letter showed clearly that she discredited the accounts of her son and accepted those of the man who had brought back a harrowing tale. Why she credited the story of a man who



LA GLORIA, CUBA, LOOKING NORTH.
Photograph by V. K. Van De Venter, Jan. 23, 1900.

never got further than Nuevitas in preference to that of her own son, who had been at La Gloria for months, I never could understand, especially as the latter was an intelligent and apparently perfectly reliable young man. Doubtless mortals are predisposed to believe the worst. I looked up the woman's youngest son, and found him well and happy, and ready to join with his brother in speaking favorably of La Gloria.

Meanwhile, we were living contentedly in La Gloria, enjoying excellent health and suffering no serious discomfort, and laughing in uproarious glee over the sensational articles which appeared in many of the newspapers of the States. With no little surprise we learned from the great newspapers of the United States that we were "marooned in a Cuban swamp," suffering from "malaria and starvation," and "dying of yellow fever and smallpox." As a matter of fact, at that time there had not been a single death or one case of serious sickness. The health of the colonists remained good through the winter, the spring, and even the following summer.

Indeed, the colonists had but few grievances, so few that they would sometimes manufacture them out of trifles. Of such was

the "sugar riot" with its laughable and harmonious ending. One day in the latter part of January, when the arrival of provisions was barely keeping pace with the arrival of colonists, a small invoice of sugar was brought into La Gloria over the bad road from the port. Scarcely had it been unloaded at the commissary when the head of the engineer corps took possession of about half of it for the surveyors and the boarders at their table, and gave orders that the other half should be turned over to the Cuban workmen of the company. The carrying out of this order aroused great indignation among the colonists who were boarding themselves and had run out of sugar, as most of them had. This action of the amateur "sugar trust" caused certain of the colonists to sour, so to speak, on all of the officers and chief employés of the company, for the time being, at least, and mutterings, "not loud but deep," were heard all about the camp. Not that there was danger of a sanguinary conflict, but a war of words seemed imminent. The "era of good feeling" was threatened.

A day or two later, on the evening of Saturday, January 27, a meeting of the colonists was held preparatory to the organization

of a pioneer association, and it was arranged among some of the leading spirits in the sugar agitation that at the close of this session the saccharine grievance should be publicly aired. The gathering was held around a camp-fire in the open air, in front of headquarters tent. The regularly called meeting adjourned early, with a feeling of excited expectancy in the air. Something was about to happen. The officers of the company on the ground, it was understood, were to be raked over the coals for favoring the Cubans and thus perpetrating an outrage on the colonists. The colonists whose tempers had been kept sweet by a sufficiency of sugar lingered around in the pleasant anticipation of witnessing an *opera bouffe*.

But it was the unexpected that happened. Just as the sugar orators were preparing to orate, a man with muddy boots pushed through the crowd and entered headquarters tent. A moment later the stalwart form of Colonel Maginniss emerged from the tent, and in his hand he bore a slip of paper. It was a cablegram from New York, which had just been brought in from Nuevitas, announcing the election of General Van der Voort as president of the Cuban Land and Steamship

Company. When the dispatch had been read to the crowd, there was silence for an instant, and then the air was rent with cheers. There had never been any question about General Van der Voort's popularity. The colonists had full faith in his honesty and devotion to the colony, and hence looked upon his election to the presidency of the company as the best possible security for the success of the enterprise. They had been distrustful of the management of the company; the choice for the new president inspired them with renewed hope and confidence. It was the unanimous opinion that it was the best thing that could have happened. He was the right man in the right place; he was in La Gloria to stay, and reckoned himself as a colonist among them.

The sugar agitators forgot that their coffee had not been sweetened for forty-eight hours, and joined heartily in the cheering. In fact, all who had "come to scoff remained to pray," so to speak. It was voted to send a cablegram to the New York office announcing the deep satisfaction of the colonists in the choice made for president. General Van der Voort responded to calls and made an excellent speech.

A little later in the evening there was a big demonstration in honor of the significant event. More than anything else it resembled a Fourth of July celebration. Bonfires were lighted and salutes fired, and the air of La Gloria resounded with cheers. The Cubans came over from their camp, and after the Americans had got through, started in for a celebration of their own. This was partly because of their fondness for General Van der Voort and partly on account of their childish love of noise and display. The colonists became convinced that night that if the Cubans ever become American citizens they will be equal to all of the Fourth of July requirements. The noise they made double discounted that made by the colonists. They cheered and shouted and fired salutes by the hundred. They marched up and down the main street, singing and laughing and blowing conch shells. They freed Cuba over again, and had a rattling good time in doing it. It seemed as if the racket would never end, but about midnight they went jabbering back to their camp. It was the noisiest night in the history of La Gloria. But the "sugar riot" was averted, and never took place.

CHAPTER VII.

ADVENTURES AND MISADVENTURES.

AMONG the dozen women in the camp, the most striking figure was Mrs. Moller, a Danish widow, who came from one of the states, Pennsylvania, I believe. I cannot say exactly when she reached La Gloria, but she was one of the earliest of her sex to arrive, and achieved the distinction of building the first house in the "city." Speaking of sex, it was not easy to determine that of Mrs. Moller upon a casual acquaintance. Slight of figure, with bronzed face and close-cut hair, she wore a boy's cap, blouse, trousers, a very short skirt, and rubber boots, while her belt fairly bristled with revolvers and knives. She was a quiet, imperturbable person, however, and it was difficult to get her to relate her adventures, which had been somewhat extraordinary.

She first came into La Gloria from Palota, where she landed from a boat with no other company than her trunk. There was not a living person at or near Palota, so, deserting

her baggage, she started out afoot and alone, and attempted to make her way along the muddy and difficult trail nine miles to La Gloria. It was a hard road to travel, with scarcely a habitation along the way. Late in the afternoon she reached an inhabited shack, and the Cubans invited her to spend the night. Although weary, she declined the invitation, and pressed on. Darkness soon overtook her, but still she kept on through the dense woods. The trail was exceedingly rough, and she stumbled along among stumps, roots, and muddy gullies. Every few steps she fell down, and finally becoming exhausted, she was compelled to spend the night in the heart of the forest. She had no shelter whatever, and no means of making a fire. She sat in the woods all night, not being able to go to sleep, her only company being the mosquitoes. In the morning she found she had lost her way, but at last struck a Cuban trail, and was overtaken by a native horseman. He kindly gave her a place in front of him on his pony, and thus she entered the youthful city of La Gloria.

Nor was this Mrs. Moller's last adventure. She had an extraordinary faculty for getting

into trouble. Her trunk, which she had abandoned at Palota, was rifled by some one, probably a wandering Cuban, and she spent much time in traveling about the country seeking to get the authorities to hunt up the offender and recover the stolen goods. On one occasion she started in the early evening to walk into La Gloria from the port. When she had got about half way darkness came on and she lost the indistinct trail across the savanna. Not daring to go further, she roosted in a tree all night. Her idea in taking to the tree was that the mosquitoes would be less numerous at such an elevation, but she did not escape them altogether. Nothing serious happened and she turned up in camp all right the next morning. Mrs. Moller had no better luck when she rode than when she walked. At one time, while driving from Las Minas to Nuevitas in a wagon with another colonist, the team went over an embankment in the darkness and was so badly damaged that she and her companion were obliged to walk into Nuevitas, twelve or fifteen miles distant, along the railroad track. The journey was neither easy nor pleasant.

But Mrs. Moller had both pluck and enterprise. She it was who built the first house in

La Gloria, a log cabin far up in the woods on Central avenue. It was put up in the latter part of January. She employed an American and a Cuban to construct it, and had it covered with a canvas roof. She personally



FIRST HOUSE IN LA GLORIA.

supervised the erection of the house, and when it was done planted sunflowers, banana trees, pineapples, etc., around it. She lived here alone for some time before she had any near neighbors. Mrs. Moller also enjoyed

the distinction of owning the first cow, the first calf, and the first goat in La Gloria. As these animals roamed at large much of the time and were noisy, disorderly beasts, they were anything but popular in the colony. They were so destructive to planted things, that the threats to plant the cow and her unhappy offspring were numerous and oft-repeated, and the subject was discussed in more than one meeting of the Pioneer Association. It was said that Mrs. Moller had come to La Gloria with the idea of starting a dairy business, and it was further reported that she had taken the first prize for dairy butter at the World's Fair in Chicago. But the dairy did not materialize, and La Gloria long went butterless.

It was a standing wonder with us that the Rural Guards did not disarm Mrs. Moller. They frequently met her as she traveled about the country, and must have seen that she carried deadly weapons. They did not relieve her of them, however, but the American authorities at La Gloria finally forbade her to wear her revolvers about the camp. It must not be thought that Mrs. Moller always dressed as I have described her. On state occasions, such as Sunday services and

the regular Saturday night meetings of the Pioneer Association, she doffed her blue blouse and rubber boots, and came out with a jacket and the most immaculate starched and stiff bloomers, gorgeous in light and bright colors. At such times she was a wonder to behold. Mrs. Moller spoke broken English, and was not greatly given to talking except when she had business on hand.

But if Mrs. Moller was the most striking figure in camp, the most ubiquitous and irrepressible person was Mrs. Horn of South Bend, Indiana. She was one of the earliest arrivals in La Gloria, coming in with two sons and a daughter, but without her husband. Mrs. Horn was a loud-voiced, good-natured woman, who would have tipped the scales at about two hundred and fifty pounds, provided there had been any scales in La Gloria to be tipped. She reached La Gloria before the *Yarmouth* colonists, but how is something of a mystery. It is known, however, that she waded in through miles of mud and water, and was nothing daunted by the experience. Never for a moment did she think of turning back, and when she had pitched her tent, she announced in a high, shrill voice that penetrated the entire camp,

that she was in the colony to stay. She had lived in South Bend, Ind., and thought she could stand anything that might come to her in La Gloria.

Mrs. Horn claimed to be able to do anything and go anywhere that a man could, and no one was inclined to dispute the assertion. She had the temperament which never gets "rattled," and when she woke up one night and found a brook four inches deep and a foot wide running through her tent she was not in the least disconcerted. In the morning she used it to wash her dishes in. She continued to make use of it until it dried up a day or two later. One of Mrs. Horn's distinctions was that she was the first woman to take a sea bath at Port La Gloria, walking the round trip of eight miles to do so. She was both a good walker and a good swimmer. She was delighted with La Gloria and Cuba. Her sons were nearly man-grown, and her daughter was about twelve years of age. It was one of the diversions of the camp to hear Mrs. Horn call Edna at a distance of a quarter of a mile or more. Mrs. Horn may unhesitatingly be set down as a good colonist. Though at times too voluble, perhaps, she was energetic, patient, kind-hearted, and generous.

When the colonists who came on the *Yar-mouth* first arrived in La Gloria many of them were eager for hunting and fishing, but the sport of hunting wild hogs very soon received a setback. An Englishman by the name of Curtis and two or three others went out to hunt for big game. After a rough and weary tramp of many miles, they suddenly came in sight of a whole drove of hogs. They had traveled so far without seeing any game, that they could scarcely believe their eyes, but they recovered themselves and blazed away. The result was that they trudged into camp some hours later triumphantly shouldering the carcasses of three young pigs. The triumph of the hunters was short-lived, however. The next morning an indignant Cuban rode into camp with fire in his eye and a keen edge on his machete. He was in search of the "Americanos" who shot his pigs. He soon found them and could not be mollified until he was paid eight dollars in good American money. The next day the same Cuban rode into camp with a dead pig on his horse in front of him. This was larger than the others, and the man wanted seventeen dollars for it. Curtis, *et al.*, did not know whether they

shot the animal or not, but they paid the "hombre" twelve dollars. The following day the Cuban again appeared bringing another deceased porker. This was a full grown hog, and its owner fixed its value at twenty dollars. Again he got his money, and the carcass as well. How much longer the Cuban would have continued to bring in dead pigs, had he not been made to understand that he would get no more money, cannot be stated. To this day, Curtis and his friends do not know whether they actually killed all those pigs. What they are sure of is that there is small difference in the appearance of wild hogs and those which the Cubans domesticate. And this is why the hunting of wild hogs became an unpopular sport in La Gloria.

The colony had its mild excitements now and again. One evening there was long continued firing of guns and blowing of conch shells in that corner of the camp where the surveyors had their tents. Inquiring the cause, we learned that three surveyors were lost in the woods and that the noise was being made to inform them of the location of the camp. The men, who had come to Cuba as colonists, had separated

from the surveying party just before dark and attempted to make a short cut back to the camp. They had been at work in a low, wet section two or three miles northwest of the town, and their progress homeward was necessarily slow. They had not proceeded far when it became perfectly dark and it was borne in upon them that "cutting across lots" in a Cuban forest was quite a different matter from doing it in some of the States. They were obliged to suspend travel and hold up for the night. Although they could faintly hear the reports of the guns in the camp they were unable to make their way in through the thick woods. The men were without food or anything for shelter. Having an axe with them, they chopped down a tree, to keep them from the wet ground, and attempted to sleep upon its branches. The hard bed and the numerous mosquitoes were not conducive to sleep, but the tired fellows finally succumbed. When they awoke in the morning, one of them found that he had slipped down and was lying with his legs in the water. Not long after daylight they came into camp wet, tired, and hungry. It was no uncommon thing for surveyors to get lost, but nothing serious ever resulted.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CUBANS.

I AM often asked, "How did you get along with the Cubans?" very much as inquiry might be made as to how we got along with the Apaches, or with the Modocs; and one man said, decidedly, "I think I might like Cuba, but I could never stand those Cubans." He had never seen a Cuban, I believe.

We got along with the Cubans very well indeed, much better than with some of our neighbors in the States. Judging from our experience with the inhabitants of the province of Puerto Principe, there are no better people on the face of the earth to "get along with" than the Cubans. We found them, almost without exception, courteous, social, kind, hospitable, and honest. Indeed, it sometimes seemed as if there was nothing they would not do for us that lay within their power. They appeared to appreciate kind and fair treatment, and to be eager to return the same to us. Those we came in contact with were mainly of the humbler classes,



but we saw nothing to indicate that those higher in the social scale were less friendly and considerate. The Cubans we met seemed to like the Americans, and the colonists certainly reciprocated the feeling. After a residence of nearly a year among them, Hon. Peter E. Park emphatically declared that there was as little meanness in the Cubans as in any class of people he had ever fallen in with, and many other Americans in La Gloria echoed this sentiment.

I can easily conceive that under abuse the Cubans would exhibit some very disagreeable and dangerous qualities, but what people of spirit does not under such circumstances? Self-control is not a marked characteristic of the Cuban, and he is apt to revenge himself upon his enemy in any way he can at the earliest opportunity. But with kind and just treatment, he is your friend, and very good friends we found these Cubans—we of the colony at La Gloria. Among themselves they are an easy-going, good-natured, talkative people, and they display these same qualities to foreigners who approach them rightly. Rude they never are, but they sometimes show a childish sullenness when offended. Strong in their likes and dislikes, they often exhibit

no little devotion to those whom they esteem or respect, and I believe them to be quite as reliable and trustworthy as the average among the inhabitants of the tropics. I have heard it said that the Cubans of some of the other provinces do not compare favorably with those of Puerto Principe, which may be true; yet I cannot help thinking that the race as a whole has been much maligned. Under a strong, just government I believe they would prove to be excellent citizens, but I do not expect that they will soon develop much administrative ability.

Some writers and travelers have done the Cubans justice, but many obviously have not. The soldiers of the United States army have an unconcealed dislike for them, which the Cubans, naturally enough, ardently reciprocate. Perhaps the soldiers expect too much homage from a people upon whom they feel they conferred the priceless boon of liberty. At all events, in many cases where there has been bad blood between the two, it is easy to believe that the soldiers were the most to blame, for the Cubans as we met them were anything but aggressive. Many a Yankee could take lessons of them in the noble art of minding one's own business.

So much for the character of the Cubans. Less can be said for their style of living, which in the rural districts and some parts of the cities is ~~primitive to the verge of~~ squalor. In the country around La Gloria it was no uncommon thing to find a Cuban who owned hundreds or thousands of acres of land—most of it uncultivated, to be sure—living in a small, palm-thatched hut with no other floor than the hard red soil. The house would be furnished in the scantiest way, a rude wooden table, a few chairs, and perhaps a rough bench or two. Often there would be no beds other than hammocks, no stoves, and sometimes not even a fireplace of any description. The meals, such as they were, would be cooked in the open front of the shack over a fire usually built on the ground. Occasionally the enclosed room which formed the rear of the shack would have an uneven board floor, but there were never any carpets or rugs, or even a matting of any sort. Of course there was no paint or varnish, and very little color about the place save the brown of the dry thatch on the roof and the brick-red grime from the soil which colored, or discolored, everything it came in contact with like a pigment. This red stain was astonishingly in evidence everywhere.

It was to be seen upon the poles which supported the hut, on all of the furniture, upon the clothing of the inmates, and even upon their persons. It looked like red paint, and evidently was about as hard to get off. The huge wheels of the bullock carts seemed to be painted with it, and the mahogany and cedar logs hauled out of the forest took on the color. In a walking trip to the city of Puerto Principe I passed through a region about twenty miles from La Gloria where nearly all the trees along the road were colored as evenly for about two feet from the ground as if their trunks had been carefully painted red. My companions and I pondered over this matter for some time and finally arrived at the opinion that wild hogs, or possibly a large drove of domesticated swine, had rolled in the red dust of the highway and then rubbed up against the neighboring trees. They were colored to about the height of a hog's back. This seemed to be the only reasonable explanation, and is undoubtedly the true one. This region was close to the Cubitas mountains, where the Cuban insurgents long had their capital and kept their cattle to supply the army in the field; it may be that they had also large droves of hogs which roamed through the near-by country.

The Cuban homes as I found them in the rural districts around La Gloria were not ornamented with books and pictures. Sometimes, to be sure, there would be a few lithographs tacked up, and I had reason to believe that the houses were not wholly destitute of books, but they were never in evidence. The things that were always in evidence were children, chickens, and dogs, and often pigs and goats. There was a democracy about the domestic economy of the household that must have been highly flattering to the chickens, dogs, pigs, etc. They always had all the rights and privileges that the children or even the adults had. I have seen a two-year-old child and a cat eating contentedly out of the same dish.

But if the children were always in evidence, their clothing oftentimes was not. Nothing is more common in Cuba than to see young children in unabashed nakedness. Their nudity is complete, and their unconsciousness absolute. In nature's garb they toddle along some of the streets of the cities, and in the rural districts they may be seen in the same condition in and around their humble homes. Naked babies lie kicking in hammocks or more quietly in their mothers' arms, and naked children run



FRANK J. O'REILLY.
(One of the Early Colonists.)

about at play. I once stopped at a shack to get coffee, and while waiting in the open front of the "casa" for its preparation, was surrounded by a bevy of bright little children who had neglected to put on their clothes. At last it seemed to occur to a pretty four-year-old girl that she was not properly attired for company, so she sat down on the dirt floor and pulled on a slipper! She appeared somewhat disturbed at not being able to find its mate, and hunted quite a while for it, but finally gave up the search and accepted the situation, evidently concluding that a single shoe was clothing enough in which to receive even such distinguished guests as "Americanos." With the adult members of the family, also, this nakedness of the children passes as a matter of course. The climate is so mild that clothing is not demanded, but I caught myself wondering if insects never bite Cubans.

The Cubans are rather an abstemious people. They care little for their food and are not given to excessive drinking. Those in the country around La Gloria lived chiefly on pork, stewed beans, rice, and boniatos (sweet potatoes). It is a mistaken idea that they do not eat much meat; they eat a great deal of

pork in all forms, and seem to be equally fond of wild hog and the domesticated animal. As a matter of fact, there is small difference between the two. Both are "razor backs," and have practically no fat on them. The flesh tastes about as much like beef as it does like the fatted pork of New England swine. The Cubans keep a good deal of poultry, but from personal observation I cannot say that they eat much of it. The hens and the eggs are small, but the former sell for one dollar apiece and the latter for about forty cents a dozen. The Cubans in the rural parts of the province of Puerto Principe eat very little beef, but this may be because it is not easy to get it, while lamb and mutton are unheard of. The Cubans make excellent coffee of their own raising, which they invariably drink without milk. Coffee alone forms the early breakfast, the substantial breakfast being at ten o'clock, and the dinner (*la comida*) at three or four o'clock. There is nothing to eat after this, but there may be coffee in the evening. In fact, the Cubans are liable to drink coffee at any hour of the day, and they always wind up their two regular meals with it. They are fond of sweets, particularly a sort of preserved orange (*dulce naranja*). It may be that they

eat fresh fruit, but when I do not know, for I never saw a Cuban eating an orange, a banana, or a pineapple. These they sold to us at rather excessive prices. The Cubans nearly all drink, but very little at a time, and rarely get drunk. Their favorite drinks are wine, rum, and brandy (aguardiente). In a holiday week in the city of Puerto Principe, the only two men I saw intoxicated were Americans. One was a soldier, the other a camp follower.

The Cubans of the rural districts did not appear to be religious, although there was apt to be a rude wooden cross fixed in the ground in front of their dwellings, possibly with a superstitious idea of thus averting evil. These crosses were nothing more than a slender pole, eight or ten feet high, stripped of its bark, with a cross piece near the top. They were dry and weather beaten, and looked more like a roost for birds than a religious emblem. Smaller wooden crosses were to be found in the little graveyards that we occasionally came upon. These seldom contained more than two or three graves, which were unmarked by any visible name or inscription. In the villages there were, of course, larger cemeteries, but the country I am writing of was very

sparsely settled, averaging scarcely more than one or two families to the square mile.

The natives appeared to have very few amusements. They hunted somewhat, and in the villages and cities had occasional dances of rather a weird character. They had cock fights, too, I suppose, but these did not seem to be a feature of the country life about us. The rural Cuban spends much of his time in riding about the country on his patient and intelligent pony, buying supplies and disposing of his small produce. When they till their land is a mystery, for they never seem to be at work upon it. In fact, very little was tilled at all in the region about La Gloria. It was no uncommon thing to find a man owning hundreds of acres, with less than one acre under cultivation. This condition was usually explained by the statement that everything had been killed out during the Ten Years' War, and that the natives were too poor to again put their land under cultivation. This was a half-truth, at least, but Cuban indifference must have had something to do with it. One of the La Gloria colonists once asked an intelligent and good-appearing elderly Cuban why he did not cultivate more of his land. "What is the use?" was the reply. "When

I need money I pick off some bananas and sell them. I get for them twenty or twenty-five dollars, which lasts me a long time. When I need more money, I pick more bananas." This is the common Cuban view. His natural indifference, combined with the exactions of Spanish government, has kept his mind free from any thought of making provision for the future.

The reader should bear in mind that I have been describing the people of the province of Puerto Principe, and mainly of the rural portions thereof. I am well aware that in the more thickly settled and more prosperous provinces fine country houses are sometimes to be found, and the people generally may live somewhat differently and perhaps better, but I believe I have faithfully pictured the typical Cuban as he exists to-day in the country districts of Puerto Principe, the fertile and unfortunate province which has probably suffered more from the ravages of war in the last thirty years than any other province in the island. It was completely despoiled during the Ten Years' War, and has never recovered. Its deserted plantations are now being reclaimed, largely by Americans, and ere long will blossom forth with luscious fruits and other valuable products.

The slight acquaintance which I had with the Cubans of the cities of Puerto Principe and Nuevitas led me to the belief that they did not differ greatly from the more intelligent inhabitants of the country sections. Among the half hundred Cubans who worked for the company and occupied a camp at La Gloria, were many from the cities of the province, the others coming from small towns and villages. Most of them had served in the Cuban army—the “Army of Liberation,” as it was called. Though these men had but few comforts, they appeared to be happy and contented; they were almost invariably peaceable and good-humored. The Americans liked these “Cú-bi-ans”—as some of the colonists persisted in calling them—and entire harmony prevailed. It was amusing to me when we first arrived to hear some of the Western colonists inadvertently speak of them as “the Indians,” owing, I suppose, to their primitive mode of living. Columbus called them by the same name when, on the 28th of October, 1492, he landed on the island at a point not twenty miles from what is now Port La Gloria,—but within the last four hundred years the appellation of “Cuban” has become well known through-

out the world. The Cubans must work out their own destiny, but I am satisfied that they will steadily progress in the scale of civilization.



CHAPTER IX.

STEPS OF PROGRESS.

THE opening of the month of February found the colonists in excellent health and good spirits, and hard at work on their land or for the company. The La Gloria post-office had been established, church services were held regularly in a large tent, and the La Gloria Pioneer Association had been organized and held its regular meeting on Saturday evening of each week. Town lots were being cleared, gardens planted, and pineapple plants set out as fast as the land could be prepared and the "suckers" obtained.

Through the active efforts of General Van der Voort, a United States post-office was established immediately after his arrival. The general held the commission as postmaster, and selected for his assistant, Col. John F. Early of Wilber, Nebraska, who had been postmaster of his town before coming to Cuba. The general being otherwise engaged, most of the actual work of the office

fell upon Colonel Early, who was well qualified to perform it. Some months later, Van der Voort resigned the postmastership, and Early was promoted to the head of the office. The post-office first occupied a small space in headquarters tent, but was soon moved to a tent by itself near at hand. Here it remained until the fall of 1900, when it was moved into a new wooden building constructed for it on Central avenue. From the first the office did considerable business, which steadily increased. The colonists wrote and received many letters, but were loud in their complaints of the irregularity and infrequency of the mails. In a measure, this faultfinding was justified, but the philosophical were more patient and felt that the colony was lucky to have a post-office at all. The remedy was slow in coming, but the mail facilities gradually improved. At first the letters were collected at the office in a wooden box, but before many weeks had passed a regulation metallic receptacle, painted red and marked "U. S. Mail," was placed in front of the tent. I well remember the shout that went up from the assembled colonists when this reminder of home and civilization was brought in on



horseback from the port by the mail carrier. It seemed almost like having a glimpse of the old home.

The regular sworn mail carrier between Port La Gloria and the post-office was Señor Ciriaco Rivas, familiarly known as "the old señor" among the colonists, by whom he was much beloved. He was a true-hearted gentleman and a brave soldier, being a veteran of the Ten Years' War and the later conflict. He was one of the best friends that the colonists had, and was their guest and companion on many occasions, and sometimes their host. Señor Rivas owned a large tract of land in the neighborhood, but lived with his family in the Cuban camp at La Gloria. While scorning to take pay from individuals for his services, he assisted the colonists in manifold ways. In the summer of 1900 he was named by the government as *alcalde* (magistrate) of La Gloria and the country for five miles around, but on the 15th day of the following September he died at Nuevitas, lamented alike by Cubans and Americans.

Besides attending to his post-office duties, Colonel Early represented large land interests in the colony and gave much time to work in connection therewith. He was one

of the most enthusiastic of the colonists, being delighted with the country and its prospects. Fond of hunting and fishing, a lover of birds, trees, and flowers, versatile in his tastes and accomplishments, Colonel Early found Cuba much to his liking, and complained of nothing save the "hell-hens," as he irreverently called the despised jejines (sand flies). He was a veteran of the Civil War, and had been something of a politician in his Nebraska home.

Unlike the mining camps of our great West, La Gloria was a moral and orderly town. This was largely due to the fact that General Van der Voort insisted that no liquor should be sold, a prohibition which was rigidly enforced. The result was that there was peace and quiet, and no crime save a few small thefts. Very little policing was necessary. At the beginning the police force consisted of Mr. George H. Matthews of Asbury Park, N. J., whose only duty appeared to be a daily tour of the camp in the early evening. Chief of Police Matthews lived in a tent at the upper end of the camp. When darkness came on he would light his little lantern and "go down the line," as he called his nightly trip down the main street



THE FIRST WOMEN COLONISTS OF LA GLORIA.

Mrs. Spiker. Mrs. Horn. Mrs. Morrison. Mrs. Matthews.
 Miss Boston. Mrs. Hovora. Mrs. Lowell.
 Mrs. McElman. Edna Horn.
 Mrs. Smith. Mrs. Neff.

and back. The whole operation, including lighting the lantern, occupied about twenty minutes. Mr. Matthews also plied the trade of a barber, charging twenty-five cents for a shave. It was finally decided that if anybody was robbing the colonists, he was the man, and the police force was abolished altogether. Soon after Mr. Matthews and his wife returned to their home in Asbury Park. They were well liked, and their departure was regretted. A little later there were some actual thefts, generally attributed to negroes who lurked about the camp, and Eugene Kezar, from Barre, Vermont, was put on as night watchman. He performed this duty faithfully, as he did every duty which devolved upon him, and the thefts soon ceased. Much of the time Kezar was in the employ of the company in the daytime about the camp, supervising the erection of tents, taking care of property, and performing manifold duties in the interest of the company and the colonists.

The first church service in La Gloria was held on January 14, conducted by the Rev. A. E. Seddon of Atlanta, Ga., a minister of the Christian church, who was one of the colonists who came on the first *Yarmouth*.

It was attended by a large proportion of the colonists. Mr. Seddon was a good preacher and a cultivated man, but did not long remain at La Gloria. Becoming interested in another proposed colony, he took his departure from La Gloria soon after the allotment of the land. Next the Rev. J. W. Harris of Vermont preached for one Sunday, but he also took an early departure. At about this time the venerable Dr. William I. Gill of Asbury Park, N. J., joined the colony, and conducted church services for some weeks. His health not being good, he was forced to give up regular preaching. For a time the congregation was without an officiating clergyman, but sermons were read each Sunday by some layman, and a Sabbath school was regularly held. With the spring came two ministers together, the Rev. James G. Stuart of London, Canada, and the Rev. W. A. Nicholas of Huntington, West Virginia. Mr. Stuart's stay at this time was temporary, but he preached one Sunday to the edification of a good-sized audience. When his leave of absence expired he returned to his far away home in Canada, but before sailing he expressed himself as being greatly pleased with La Gloria, and made

known his intention to make it his residence at some future time. He left money to have a large tract of land cleared and cultivated. Mr. Stuart had been the owner of an orange grove in California, and was satisfied that the fruit would do finely in the soil around La Gloria. He was highly enthusiastic in his praise of the country. Mr. Nicholas, a minister of the Baptist church, succeeded Mr. Stuart in the La Gloria pulpit, and preached several weeks. He then returned to West Virginia for the purpose of bringing his family to Cuba to establish a permanent home. In June he brought his wife and children to La Gloria and resumed his religious teaching. He has since preached regularly, and is held in high respect by the colonists. Mrs. Nicholas is also very popular in the colony. Mr. Nicholas is delighted with Cuba, and is enjoying greatly improved health. Besides the preaching and Sunday-school, weekly prayer-meetings, teachers' meetings, and choir meetings have been held in the colony from its earliest days.

The first organization of the colonists, and the force which had most to do with shaping the course of affairs in the early life of the colony, was the La Gloria Pioneer Associa-



DR. WILLIAM P. PEIRCE.

tion. At a mass meeting in front of headquarters tent on the 18th of January, Dr. W. P. Peirce of Hoopeston, Ill., was made temporary chairman, and R. C. Bourdette of Dexter, Kansas, temporary secretary. James M. Adams, D. E. Lowell, and R. C. Bourdette were appointed a committee to draft a constitution and by-laws. At a meeting January 27 the committee reported a constitution and by-laws, which were adopted, and the following officers were elected for a term of six months: Dr. W. P. Peirce, president; D. E. Lowell, vice-president; R. G. Barner, secretary; Col. Thomas H. Maginniss, treasurer; E. B. Newsom, W. G. Spiker, J. A. Florence, W. M. Carson, and Rev. William I. Gill, executive board. The president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer were members of the executive board *ex-officio*.

Dr. Peirce, the president, was one of the ablest of the colonists, a man of consequence in his state, and possessed of both mental and financial resources. Genial, kindly, and humorous, he was much liked by his fellow-colonists, and made an admirable presiding officer for the association. He had entire faith in the ultimate success of the colony, and did much to advance its welfare. Mr. Lowell,

the vice-president, had been a successful fruit grower in Florida and a leading citizen in that section of the state where he resided. He was one of the first of the colonists to reach La Gloria, coming in with his wife before the first *Yarmouth* party arrived. He was a substantial and practical man, and a valuable prop to the colony, wherein he was popular and influential. Mr. Barner, the secretary, was a young man from Philadelphia, and was one of the colonists who came on the first *Yarmouth*. He was an expert stenographer and typewriter, and a man of good judgment and untiring industry. For a time he worked upon the land, but was soon taken into the president's office, where he proved to be a faithful and efficient clerk and secretary. Well liked among his brother and sister colonists, he was given numerous responsible positions as new organizations were formed. Colonel Maginniss, the treasurer, was also from Philadelphia, and has been before alluded to as the superintendent of the camp. His duties as treasurer of the association were not arduous, but he performed good service as chairman of the committee on transportation. The other members of the executive board were leading colonists, and intelligent and practical men.

The executive board appointed the following committees : Transportation, Col. Thomas H. Maginniss (chairman), J. A. Florence, S. L. Benham, W. P. Hartzell, Thomas R. Geer—the latter resigning, he was replaced by James M. Adams ; supplies, E. B. Newsom (chr.), D. E. Lowell, W. G. Spiker, E. F. Rutherford, M. T. Holman ; sanitation, Dr. W. P. Peirce (chr.), G. A. Libby, M. T. Jones, W. S. Dunbar, G. H. Matthews ; manufactures, D. L. Carleton (chr.), W. L. Yard, J. A. Anderson, J. C. Kelly, W. H. Gruver ; history of the colony, James M. Adams (chr.), A. E. Seddon, Rev. William I. Gill, M. A. C. Neff, F. X. Hovora ; legal affairs, Gen. Paul Van der Voort (chr.), Col. Thomas H. Maginniss, Capt. Joseph Chace, W. M. Carson, J. F. Early ; education and religious observance, Mrs. Andrews (chr.), Mrs. D. E. Lowell, Mrs. W. G. Spiker, Mrs. William I. Gill, Mrs. M. A. C. Neff ; village improvements, M. A. C. Neff (chr.), D. E. Lowell, B. F. Seibert, E. B. Newsom, J. C. Florence, Peter Larsen, H. E. Mosher, S. M. Van der Voort, James Peirce, Mrs. Clara Broome, Mrs. J. A. Horn, Mrs. G. H. Matthews. Mrs. Andrews did not remain in La Gloria, and hence never served on the

committee on education and religious observance; Mrs. D. E. Lowell acted as chairman and directed the work of the committee with zeal and intelligence. As time went on, numerous other vacancies occurred in the several committees, but these were filled and the work was not retarded. Most of the committees were more or less active and accomplished as much as could reasonably be expected considering the many obstacles encountered. If the net results accomplished by the association at this early stage seem small, it should be remembered that it was no slight task to hold the colony together in the face of natural obstructions, irritating delays, and disheartening disappointments. All these things the colonists had to encounter, and the Pioneer Association performed a great work in banding the settlers together, staying their courage and preventing a stampede in the darkest hours, and in keeping things moving, slowly though it may have been, in the right direction. Indeed, it is impossible to conceive what the colonists would have done at the beginning without the coöperative aid afforded by this organization. Practically the whole colony belonged to it during the first few months of its existence.

The meetings were held every Saturday night and were always well attended. They were valued not only for utilitarian purposes, but as almost the sole amusement enjoyed by the colonists during the week. These meetings supplied the place of the theatre, the lyceum, and social festivities, and some of the women were heard to say that they looked forward the whole week to this regular gathering. Subjects of absorbing interest always came up, the speaking was quite good and never tedious, and humorous and witty remarks were very often heard and fully appreciated. The ludicrous always appealed to the audience keenly. Many of the colonists participated in the speaking, and the discussions were invariably good natured. The speakers were sure of close attention and generous treatment from their auditors, even from those who might disagree with them. The brotherly feeling which pervaded the colony was always manifest at these gatherings. Some of the Cubans would often attend, and more than once a Spaniard was in the audience. It was a strange sight, one of these meetings. In the dim light of two or three lanterns, the colonists would be grouped together under a shelter tent, some sitting on rude wooden

benches and others standing. Those on the outskirts were as often under the stars as under the tent. Both the audience and the surroundings were picturesque, albeit the whole effect was suggestive of a primitive life which few of the colonists had before experienced. The scene is one that is not likely ever to be forgotten by those who participated in it.

In July, 1900, the Pioneer Association elected new officers, as follows: President, D. E. Lowell; vice-president, John Latham; secretary, William M. Carson; treasurer, J. R. P. de les Derniers. By this time new and more wieldy organizations had sprung up which took much of the practical work from the association, the latter becoming more of a reminiscence than a potent force. It is still, however, a factor in the social life of La Gloria.

CHAPTER X.

EVENTS IMPORTANT AND OTHERWISE.

ON the last day of January I became private secretary to President Van der Voort, serving in that capacity until my return to the States nearly four months later. This position brought me into close and intimate contact with all of the colonists, and to no small extent I shared their joys and woes. I was made the recipient of their confidences, and was sometimes able, I believe, to make somewhat smoother the rather thorny paths they had to travel. When I was unable to do this, it was never from lack of full sympathy with their trials and hardships. I cannot be too emphatic in saying that never in my life have I met an aggregation of men and women who were more honest, good-natured, patient, and reasonable. To me, personally, they invariably extended the kindest consideration, and so, for that matter, did the officers of the company. The nucleus for the first American colony in Cuba was beyond all question a good and substantial one.



GEN. VAN DER VOORT'S CUBAN HOUSE.

About the middle of February Gen. Van der Voort moved into his new Cuban house, which had been constructed for him by Cuban workmen in an open space ninety or one hundred yards back from the main street of the camp. The house and most of the tents constituting the camp were on the company's reservation just north of the front line of the town. As fast as the colonists got their town lots cleared they moved on to them, but their places in the reservation camp were often taken by new-comers.

The general's palm house, or shack, was an ingenious and interesting piece of work. The Cubans exercised all their marvelous skill in its construction, with highly creditable results. When completed it was water tight, and cool, comfortable, and picturesque. The house contained two good-sized rooms, an enclosed bedroom at the back and an open apartment at the front used for an office and reception-room. Until a conventional board floor was laid by an "Americano" carpenter, there was not a nail in the entire structure. The upright poles, cross pieces, the ridgepole, and the rafters and cross rafters, were securely fastened together with tough bark and vines, while the roof was carefully thatched with

palm leaves. The latter were broad, fan-shaped leaves, several feet across at the widest part. Each had a stout stem two or three feet long. The leaves were laid upon the roof, beginning at the eaves, stems pointing to the ridgepole. The leaves were carefully lapped like shingles, and tightly lashed by the stems to the rafters and cross rafters. If a leak was discovered it was easy to close it by binding on another leaf. The leaves used came from what is commonly known as the dwarf or cabbage palm. Royal palm bark was used along the ridgepole. The back and sides of the house were of palm leaves, as was the front of the rear room, a door being cut through it. The front of the outer apartment was entirely open. The original floor was of wood cut from the royal palm, the rough and heavy boards, or planks, being fastened to cross logs by wooden pins. Not proving entirely satisfactory, this floor, after a short time, was replaced by a more even one laid by a Yankee carpenter. This was the only change made by General Van der Voort in his Cuban house, with which he was greatly delighted. When new the prevailing color, inside and out, was a beautiful green, which soon turned to a yellowish

brown. The change did not add to its beauty, but it still remained comfortable and picturesque. The cost of such a house in La Gloria was about fifty dollars. The general's house was wonderfully cool, as I can testify from personal experience, having occupied it daily for three months.

Within a dozen yards of the general's house stood a historic landmark known as the "Lookout Tree," a gigantic tree used by the Cubans during the Ten Years' War and the late insurrection to watch for Spanish gunboats that patrolled the coast and for filibusters bringing arms and ammunition. It was at or very near Port La Gloria—known to the Cubans as Viaro—that the celebrated *Gussie* landed her arms and ammunition for the Cubans, just after the intervention of the United States. Up through the "Lookout Tree" grow what appear to be two small and very straight trees, about three feet apart; actually, they are the downward shooting branches of a parasitic growth, taking root in the ground. The Cubans have utilized these for a ladder, cutting notches into them and fastening cross-pieces, or rungs, very securely with barbed wire. One may climb high into the big tree by this curious ladder, and from

the top a good view of the coast is obtained. After our arrival the tree was sometimes brought into requisition in watching for the boat from Nuevitas, and the good climbers among the colonists often made the ascent merely for the satisfaction of performing the feat, which was not such an easy one as might appear, since the ladder did not reach to the top by fifteen or twenty feet.

A space of about half an acre, chiefly in front of the house, General Van der Voort had plowed and planted for a garden. Vegetables were sown in February and a little later a good number of pineapple plants, banana, orange and coffee trees, etc., were set out. The vegetables began to come on in April, and the fruit trees and pineapples exhibited a thrifty growth from month to month. Small palm trees were also set out along the path leading from the house across the garden to Central avenue. The company had another and larger garden near by which was planted in the latter part of January. Some of its products were ready for the table in March, and radishes even earlier. The soil of these gardens was not of the richest, being red and containing oxide of iron; but, for all that, seeds came up marvelously quick and

plants grew well. I have known beans which were planted Saturday morning to be up on the following Monday. The soil of practically all of the plantations and many of the town lots is very rich.

On February 21, the day before Washington's birthday, occurred the first birth in La Gloria, a lusty son being born to Mr. and Mrs. Olaf Olson. Mr. Olson was one of the most prosperous and progressive of the colonists, and his wife was a true pioneer. At the time of the birth the Olsons were living in a tent on their town lot on Market street, not far from Central avenue. Dr. Peirce was the officiating physician, and the infant developed as rapidly, in proportion, as plants in that tropical clime. It proved to be a remarkably healthy child. It was promptly named Olaf El Gloria Olson, and on the request of the Pioneer Association, the company generously made it a present of a town lot. Soon after the birth of the child, Mr. Olson moved into a house of his own construction.

The weather at this time was good and the temperature very comfortable. Ordinarily the thermometer registered throughout the day from 70 to 84 degrees of heat. The lowest temperature for January was 55°; the

highest, 91° . The lowest for February was 56° ; the highest, 91° . The extremes of heat are nearly as great in winter as in summer, but there is much more variation. In summer the temperature ordinarily runs from about 78° to 90° , but occasionally touches 94° , which is the highest I have ever known it to be in La Gloria. Even at this figure the heat is not oppressive. There is such a refreshing breeze night and day in Cuba that one does not suffer from the heat either in summer or winter. The climate is so fine at all seasons of the year, that to a New Englander it seems absolutely perfect. The colonists worked hard every day under the rays of the sun and suffered no ill effects. They came to the conclusion that getting acclimated was a "cinch" in comparison with enduring the changing weather of the Northern states.

During the first week in February the colonists, such of them as were not otherwise employed, began the construction of a corduroy road over the worst places on the trail from La Gloria to the port. The work was under the supervision of Colonel Maginniss, and from twenty to thirty men labored daily for some time. While not of a permanent character, this work made the road more

passable for pedestrians and animals, and was of material aid in the hauling up of provisions and belated baggage. By the end of February most of us had got our trunks. The workers on the road were employed by the company, with the understanding that their wages should be credited upon their land payments, or upon the purchase of new land. This was satisfactory to the colonists, and many took advantage of the opportunity to acquire more town lots. Many other employés of the company also turned in their time for the purchase of plantation land or town lots.

On the 19th of February the first well in La Gloria was opened. It was at the corner of Market street and Florida avenue, and was dug by a syndicate of colonists who lived in that vicinity. Good water was struck at a depth of about twelve feet. Many people used the water from this well, and a little later it was made considerably deeper. The well was square, and the ground was so hard at this point that it was found to be unnecessary to stone it. Many other wells were dug soon after, in all of which good water was found fifteen or twenty feet below the surface of the ground.

Early in February, M. A. C. Neff, engineer and architect, who had been in charge of the town site survey, was transferred to the work of preparing real estate maps and books. Mr. Neff was a fine draughtsman, and his colored maps were a delight to the eye. One of his maps was used in the allotment of town lots, another was placed on file at Puerto Principe in connection with the recording of deeds, while others were sent to the New York office of the company or kept for use in La Gloria. Much credit is due Mr. Neff for his part in the upbuilding of La Gloria. He was enthusiastic in forwarding improvements of all kinds. Both he and his admirable wife considered themselves colonists, and looked forward with pleasant anticipations to a permanent home in La Gloria.

CHAPTER XI.

SELF-RELIANCE OF THE COLONISTS.

I WAS deeply impressed by the courage and self-reliance of the colonists. From the start they showed a splendid ability to take care of themselves. One day early in February a white-bearded old fellow past seventy years of age, with blue overalls on and a hoe over his shoulder, appeared at the door of General Van der Voort's tent.

"General," he said, "if a man owns a lot, has anybody else a right to come on to it and pick fruit of any kind?"

"Not if the owner has a revolver and bowie knife," laughingly replied Van der Voort.

"Well," said the man, "I just thought I'd ask ye. A couple o' fellers (Cubans) came on to my lot to-day while I was at work there and began to pick some o' these 'ere guavas. I told 'em to git out, but they did n't go. Then I went for 'em with this hoe. One of 'em drawed his machete, but I did n't care for that. I knew I could reach him with my hoe

before he could reach me with his knife. They went off."

General Van der Voort laughed heartily, and evidently was satisfied that the man with the hoe was able to protect himself without the aid of the La Gloria police force.

The old man's name, as I afterwards learned, was Joseph B. Withee. Some of the colonists who had become intimately acquainted with him familiarly called him "grandpa," although he was not the oldest man in the colony. His age was seventy-one years, and he hailed from the state of Maine. None of his family or friends had come to Cuba with him, but he had grown children living in the Pine Tree state. Alone and single-handed he began his pioneer life in La Gloria, but he was not daunted by obstacles or fearful of the future. On the contrary, he was most sanguine. He worked regularly every day clearing and planting his plantation, and was one of the first of the colonists to take up his residence on his own land. He soon had vegetables growing, and had set out strawberry and pineapple plants, besides a number of banana, orange, and lemon trees. It was his boast that he had the best spring of water in the colony, and it

certainly was a very good one. Mr. Withee declared that his health was much improved since coming to Cuba, and that he felt ten or fifteen years younger. Everybody in the colony could bear witness that he was remarkably active and industrious. Once his relatives in Maine, not hearing from him, became alarmed, and wrote to the company asking if he were alive and in La Gloria. I went down to his plantation with the letter, and asked him if he was alive. He thought he was, and suspended work long enough to sniff at the idea that he was not able to take care of himself.

Mr. Withee was wont to admit that before he came to Cuba he had a weak back, but the only weakness we were ever able to detect in him was an infirmity of temper which foreboded pugnacious action. Most assuredly he had plenty of backbone, and his persistent pugnacity was highly amusing. He was always wanting to "lick" somebody, and I know not what my fate will be if we ever meet after he reads these lines, although we were excellent friends in La Gloria. I can imagine that my friend Withee was brought up in one of those country school "deestricks" where every boy had to fight

his way step by step to the respect of his associates, and where it was the custom for the big scholars to attempt each winter to thrash the teacher and throw him into a snowdrift. If so, I will warrant that Withee was held in high respect.

Withee had a great idea of standing up for his rights, and for a long time he was on the war-path, as he confided to me, in pursuit of a surveyor who had cut down a small palm tree on his plantation. He didn't know which individual of the survey corps it was who perpetrated the "outrage," but if the old man found out, one of Chief Kelly's men was in for a good licking. Of course, the surveyor was entirely innocent of any intent to injure the property of Mr. Withee or anybody else, and cut the tree while running a survey line. It was some months after this, in September, that the spirit of Withee's revolutionary sires joined issue with his fierce indignation, and produced fatal results—fatal to several chickens that invaded his premises. A neighboring colonist, who lived on the other side of the avenue, kept a large number of hens, and allowed them free range. They developed a fondness for wandering across the road, and feeding in

Withee's well-stocked garden. They did n't know Withee. The old man sputtered vehemently, and remonstrated with the owner—but the chickens continued to come. Finally, Withee went to a friendly colonist and borrowed his gun. Soon after his return home, one of the detested hens wandered nonchalantly across the dead line, and presently was minus a head. Another essayed the same feat, with the result that there were two headless chickens in La Gloria. Withee's aim was as good as when he used to shoot chipmunks in the Maine woods. The owner of the hens heard the reports of the gun, and came over. He was told to go home and pen up his poultry. Taking the two dead chicks, he went to the Rural Guards and entered a complaint. While he was gone, Withee reduced the poultry population of La Gloria by one more. The owner of the hens returned, accompanied by Rural Guards, several prominent Cubans, and a few colonists. They had come to take the gun away from Withee. The old man stood the whole crowd off, and told them to keep their feet clear of his place. They obeyed the order, but told him he must kill no more chickens under penalty of arrest. He told them to keep the chickens

off his premises under penalty of their being killed. The old man was left the master of the situation, and the hens were restricted to a pen.

Speaking of courage and self-confidence reminds me of a remark of big Jack McCauley. There was included in the company's property, about five miles from La Gloria, a deserted plantation known as Mercedes. Upon it was an old grove of orange trees, which, in the spring of 1900, bore a fine crop. For a long time everybody was allowed to help himself at will, and Cubans, colonists, and surveyors availed themselves of the opportunity to lay in a supply of fruit. At length, as the oranges grew riper, orders were given that no one should take more than he could eat on the spot, but the oranges continued to disappear by the bagful. Stalwart Jack McCauley was at that time employed about the camp by the company, and it was decided to station him out at Mercedes, with a view to stopping the raids on the orange grove. Before leaving to undertake this duty, Jack quietly remarked: "I'll go out there and see if I've got any influence, and if not, I'll create some!" Big Jack's "influence" proved to

be ample, and the balance of the orange crop was saved.

McCauley's close friend and "pardner" was J. A. Messier, familiarly known as "Albany." Together they held a large tract of plantation land. "Albany" worked as a flagman in one of the surveying parties. Once, when the mosquitoes in the woods were more than ordinarily thick and ferocious, he made a complaint, a rare thing in him or any other surveyor. "They surround you," he said, "and you can't push them away because there is nowhere to push them!" "Albany" was the leading big snake killer in the colony, and was an adept at stretching and preparing their skins. But perhaps his greatest distinction was that of being floor manager of the first ball in La Gloria, a notable event which will be described in a later chapter.

On the afternoon of February 27, the colonists who came on the third and last trip of the *Yarmouth*, about sixty in number, reached La Gloria. Among them were Arnold Mollenhauer of New York, a representative of the company; John A. Connell of East Weymouth, Mass., and S. W. Storm of Nebraska. The party was brought up



LA GLORIA, CUBA, LOOKING SOUTH. (*March, 1900.*)

from Nuevitas on the snug little steamer *Bay Shore*, and had a very comfortable passage. The *Bay Shore* was bought by the company to ply between Nuevitas and Port La Gloria, and was to have been used to transport the colonists who came to Cuba on the first *Yarmouth* excursion, but, unfortunately, she came into collision with another boat at about that time, and was unfit for use for several weeks. This was one of a singular chain of accidents and annoyances which gave the colony a serious setback at the very start. The *Bay Shore* proved to be a very unlucky boat, and was laid up from one cause or another most of the time. When the *Bay Shore* was out of commission, a sail-boat had to be used between La Gloria and Nuevitas.

Mr. Mollenhauer did not remain long at La Gloria at this time, but established his headquarters at Nuevitas, taking up the work that had been in charge of Maj. P. S. Tunison. Young Mr. Mollenhauer proved to be the right man in the right place. He was active and efficient in the performance of his duties, and was very much liked by the colonists for his gentlemanly bearing, accommodating spirit, and frank and upright character.

The affairs of the company and the colony took a new start when he came to Cuba and assumed charge of the disbursement of the funds.

John A. Connell was a prosperous business man of East Weymouth, Mass., and came to La Gloria to make it his permanent home. He was one of the most enthusiastic and progressive of the colonists, and gave daily expression to his liking for Cuba and his firm faith in the future of La Gloria. He was a man of property and of decided ability. Physically, he was a giant, being six feet four inches tall, and well proportioned. He was fond of athletics and was himself a good athlete. A man of strong intelligence, he appeared to good advantage as a speaker. Mr. Connell built the first frame building in La Gloria, a modest board structure with a roofing of tarred paper, and occupied it as a general store. It was situated on Central avenue in the company's reserve. This was not, however, the first store in La Gloria. Besides the company's commissary, W. G. Spiker started a store in a tent several months earlier. George E. Morrison opened a store in a tent on Central avenue just inside of the town line at about the same time that Connell started, and did a

good business until he returned to the States several months later. Morrison had lived in many places, including Chicago, Ill., and Central America. In practical affairs he was one of the most versatile men in the colony.

S. W. Storm of Nebraska was a veteran of the Civil War, and a good type of his class. Cheerful and buoyant, lively as a boy, he entered into the pioneer life with a hearty relish, as, indeed, did all of the many old soldiers who came to La Gloria. The renewal of camp life under agreeable climatic conditions seemed to be a great joy to them. Mr. Storm was never known to complain of anything, not even when he severely cut his foot while chopping. He brought with him to La Gloria his young son Guy, who was soon placed in school.

The first school in La Gloria was started and taught by Mrs. Whittle of Albany, N. Y. It occupied a large shelter tent on the reserve, near Central avenue. It was fitted up with a board floor, wooden benches, tables, etc. The school opened February 26 with six scholars, and though text-books were few in number, the pupils made good progress in their studies. Mrs. Whittle was an attractive and cultivated lady, and an inspiring and tactful teacher.

Before the middle of March the school had sixteen scholars, and a little later twenty-one. There was also at the same time an evening school for men, in which Mrs. Whittle taught grammar and spelling, and Mr. Max Neuber of Philadelphia, a prominent colonist, gave lessons in Spanish. Tuition was free in both schools, which were kept up until Mrs. Whittle and Mr. Neuber returned to the States in April.



CHAPTER XII.

THE FIRST HOLIDAY IN LA GLORIA.

THE first holiday in La Gloria was marked by incidents that will be long remembered by the colonists. The credit for the inauguration of the movement for such a day belongs to John A. Connell, whose warm Irish blood craved athletic sport. Some of the rest of us were not far behind him in this particular. Mr. Connell arranged a program of running, jumping, wheelbarrow and potato races, etc., and after a conference of those interested, it was decided to ask the president of the company to declare a general half-holiday. I was delegated to bring the matter before General Van der Voort, who entered heartily into the spirit of the affair and readily granted our request. Accordingly, a formal proclamation was drawn up setting aside Saturday afternoon, March 24, as a holiday throughout the colony. The first draft was copied in the elegant handwriting of Chief Engineer Kelly, duly signed by President Van der Voort and attested by his secretary, and then conspicu-

ously posted on the flag-staff which graced Central avenue. Further preparations were made for the red-letter day, and a baseball game added to the program. I found in my trunk a baseball, which I had brought to Cuba, I know not why, except, perhaps, with the American idea that a baseball is always a good companion. Simultaneously, the indefatigable J. L. Ratekin—one time a soldier in Col. William J. Bryan's Nebraska regiment in the Spanish War—dragged out of his kit a good baseball bat. Why Ratekin brought this bat to Cuba I cannot say, but I half suspect that he thought he might have to use it in self-defence. I am glad to be able to state, however, that it was put only to peaceful and legitimate uses, and killed nothing save "in-shoots" and "drops."

Saturday, March 24, was a remarkably fine day even for sunny Cuba. A cloudless sky of beautiful blue, a temperature of from 80 to 90 degrees, and a soft, refreshing breeze combined to make it ideal weather for La Gloria's initial holiday. I remember that several bicycles were brought out and used on this day, one or two by young women. The muddy trails had dried up in most places, so that wheels could be ridden for considerable dis-

tances on the roads radiating from La Gloria. The dry season was fairly on by March 1, and for some time thereafter mud was practically eliminated from our list of annoyances.

At noon the several surveying parties tramped in from their distant work in the woods, and soon after the colonists began to gather on Central avenue from headquarters tent to Connell's store. The women proved that they had not left all their finery in the States, while nearly every child was in its best bib and tucker. The men appeared in a great variety of costumes, but most of them had given more thought to comfort than to elegance. It was at this time that the first large group picture of the colonists was taken. The opportunity was too good to lose. We were hastily grouped across Central avenue, and three amateur photographers simultaneously took shots at us. The resulting photograph, though on a small scale, is a faithful picture of about half the colonists in La Gloria on March 24, 1900. One of the photographers was Lieut. Evans of the Eighth U. S. Cavalry, who had arrived in La Gloria the day before in command of a pack train consisting of about a dozen men and twenty mules. The detachment came from the city



GROUP OF COLONISTS. (*March 24, 1900.*)

of Puerto Principe and was touring the country for practice and exercise. It may easily be imagined that we were glad to see them, and they seemed equally glad to see us. At our earnest solicitation they consented to participate in our holiday sports.

The sports went off well. There were some good athletes among the colonists, but a soldier named T. Brooks succeeded in winning a majority of the events. He was a quiet little fellow, but his athletic prowess was a credit to the United States army. A few Cubans took part in the events, but did not distinguish themselves. The chief attraction of the day was the baseball game, which began about the middle of the afternoon. A diamond had been laid out in a large open space just east of Central avenue, and the ground was remarkably level and hard. It was a natural baseball field, and with but little work was ready for use. The greater part of the colony, men, women, and children, gathered to see the first exhibition of the American national game in La Gloria. Among the spectators were President Van der Voort and Chief Engineer Kelly. There were also a few Spaniards and many Cubans present. Few of the latter, probably, had

ever before seen a baseball game, although the sport is a popular pastime among the American soldiers encamped near Puerto Principe. This latter fact accounts for the proficiency of the soldiers who came to La Gloria. They formed one nine, and the other was made up of colonists. The latter played well, everything considered, but the superior discipline and practice of Uncle Sam's boys made them the winners in a close score. The game was umpired by M. T. Jones of Williamsport, Pennsylvania, one of the colonists who came on the first *Yarmouth* and the capable assistant of Superintendent Maginniss about the camp. The game ended an hour or two before sundown and closed the outdoor sports of a very successful and enjoyable day.

But there was one notable event on that first holiday not down on the program, and one which few of the colonists knew anything about at the time and of which not many had subsequent knowledge. As I wended my way in the direction of my tent near General Van der Voort's house, under the mellow rays of the declining sun, three excited colonists intercepted me. They were Chief Engineer Kelly, John A. Connell, and D. E. Lowell. Drawing me aside from the thoroughfare,

they hastily informed me that a lawyer by the name of C. Hugo Drake, of Puerto Principe, had just come into La Gloria with Lieutenant Cienfuate, the owner of the Viaro tract, with the intention of dispossessing the colonists of their land. They had ridden in on horseback from Puerto Principe, forty-five miles away. Lieutenant Cienfuate was an elderly Spaniard who had been an officer in the Spanish army, and Drake claimed to have charge, in part, of his business affairs. We had heard from Drake before, and knew perfectly well that he had induced the landholding Spaniard to come with him to La Gloria. Drake was an American, having come to Cuba from Mississippi just after the war with Spain and set up as a lawyer and restaurant keeper in Puerto Principe. He was a young man of a prominent family, but was reputed to be somewhat dissipated. He has since persistently claimed that his errand to La Gloria was not to dispossess the colonists, but in reality was in their interest. This explanation cannot be accepted, however, except upon the hypothesis that the colonists were bound to lose their lands under the contracts which they held. This, as the event proved,

was a groundless fear; their holdings were perfectly secure.

In order to make the situation clear to the reader a little explanation is necessary. The Viaro tract, which was the one in question, included about two thirds of the town site and a little over ten thousand acres of plantation land adjoining. The greater part of this land had been allotted to colonists, but no deeds had then been given. The company had made a first payment on the tract, and was paying the balance in instalments. One of these instalments was overdue when Drake came to La Gloria with Lieutenant Cienfuentes, who had owned the land, and set up the claim that the contract had lapsed. Lieutenant Cienfuentes was willing to wait a reasonable length of time for his pay, but had become suspicious that he was not going to get it at all, and hence was more or less under the influence of Drake, who appears to have been a self-appointed attorney for the Spaniard. Drake had a great scheme, which was to make a new contract directly with the colonists, or newly chosen representatives, at an advanced price for the tract. This advance was to be divided between Cienfuentes and himself, and Drake's share



would have amounted to \$25,000 or \$30,000. Of course, in Drake's scheme, the only alternative for the colonists was dispossession. Yielding to the young lawyer's insinuating representations, Lieutenant Cienfuate had agreed to the plan, but he was by no means an aggressive factor in it. Meanwhile, the company's officers in New York were concluding arrangements to make the overdue payment, which was done a few weeks later. With but little hesitation, Lieutenant Cienfuate accepted the money from Messrs. Park and Mollenhauer, and Drake's little scheme collapsed like a toy balloon.

A part of the above facts only were known to us when Messrs. Kelly, Connell, Lowell, and myself had our hurried conference late in the afternoon of our first holiday. Mr. Lowell was particularly excited, and seriously disturbed by the apprehension that he might have his land taken away from him. It was quickly agreed that it was for the mutual interest of Drake and the colony that he should not be permitted to spend the night in La Gloria. We went over to the house of General Van der Voort, and discussed the situation with him. He mingled his indignation with ours, and dictated a peremptory



order that Drake should leave the camp at once. I was commissioned to deliver the message, and Messrs. Kelly, Connell, and Lowell volunteered to accompany me. After a little search we found Drake near the "old señor's" shack. He seemed to divine our errand and came forward to meet us, pale and trembling, perhaps from excitement, possibly from fear. Indeed, we must have looked somewhat formidable if not belligerent. We were all large men, and Kelly was the only one of the four who was not six feet or more in height. I gave Drake the paper from the general. Scarcely glancing at it, he said, apologetically, in a low tone, "It's all a mistake, gentlemen, I meant no harm to anybody." We assured him that we thought he would be safer elsewhere than in La Gloria. He did not stop to argue the matter, but turning went directly to the shack and saddled his horse. We had intended to give him an hour; he was out of La Gloria in ten minutes. He was obliged to spend the night in the dense woods.

The treatment of Mr. Drake was not hospitable, but the colonists looked upon him as an interloper whose machinations might bring upon them a great deal of trouble. I

do not think he had any wish to injure the colonists, but he certainly had an itching palm for the large stake which he thought he saw within his reach. I saw him a week or two later in Puerto Principe, and he was amicable enough. He still believed his scheme would go through, but it was not long before his hopes were dashed. He told me he was heavily armed when in La Gloria, and could have "dropped" all four of us, but that he had promised Lieutenant Cienfuentes not to make any trouble. He surely did not, as it turned out. Mr. Drake had the manners of a gentleman, and extended many courtesies to me during my stay in Puerto Principe. His resentment on account of the La Gloria episode was mainly directed toward General Van der Voort, and he emphatically declared that he had already taken steps to summon the general into court for the insult.

Lieutenant Cienfuentes remained in La Gloria as our special guest. He was entertained at the officers' table, was the guest of honor at the meeting of the Pioneer Association that evening, and every effort was made to make him feel at home. On the following Monday he left for his home in Puerto Principe in high good humor.

CHAPTER XIII.

INDUSTRY OF THE COLONISTS.

THE opening of spring did not bring any material change in weather that the colonists could detect, save that the occasional rainfall had ceased. The temperature for March was about the same as for January and February, the lowest recorded by the thermometer being 53° , and the highest 92° . The weather was delightful and comfortable. There was more blossoming of flowers in the woods and the openings, and many a big tree became a veritable flower garden, with great clusters of pink orchids clinging to its huge trunk and massive limbs. There were several trees thus ornamented in close proximity to my tent.

The colonists were now progressing with their work and displaying the greatest industry. Considerable clearing had been done, and some planting. Gardens were growing well, and the colonists were eating potatoes, beans, peas, cucumbers, tomatoes, etc., of their own raising. Many thousands of pineapple plants had been set out, and banana and

orange trees were being put into the ground as fast as they could be obtained. Many of the colonists were employed more or less by the company in one capacity or another. Some worked on the road, some about the camp, a few in the gardens, and still others in the cook-house. A number had been employed in the survey corps almost from the time of their arrival, while others worked "off and on," according to their convenience and disposition. The work of the surveyors was hard and exposing, and the fare usually poor and meagre, but for all that the men generally liked the employment and there was a constant stream of applicants for vacant places. In most cases the applicant knew what was before him and hence could appreciate the grim humor of Chief Kelly's unvarying formula. After questioning the applicant to ascertain if he really wanted to work, the chief would say, facetiously: "All you have to do is to follow a painted pole and eat three meals a day." Following a "painted pole" through the mud, water, and underbrush of a Cuban jungle, especially with an axe in one's hand to wield constantly, is no sinecure, but the men did not have to work very hard at their meals! My admiration of the pluck and



THE SURVEY CORPS. (*March 24, 1900.*)

patience of the "boys" on the survey corps was unbounded, and, I believe, fully justified. At their table the chief had designated an official kicker, and no one else was supposed to utter a complaint, and it was seldom that they did. The discipline was like that of an army. When a man was ordered to do a thing, two courses lay open to him — do it or quit. Usually the orders were carried out.

One of the most capable and industrious of the colonists was B. F. Seibert of Omaha, Nebraska. He was a man of taste and refinement, and at the same time eminently practical. He was a veteran of the Civil War and a prominent citizen in the Western city whence he came. He had lived at one time in California, and there had gained special knowledge of the cultivation of fruits, flowers, and ornamental shrubbery. A few days after his arrival in La Gloria in January, Mr. Seibert was placed in charge of the port, and at once set to work to bring order out of chaos. He took care of the large amount of baggage and freight that had been dumped in the mud on the shore, placing it under temporary shelter, and a little later constructed an ample warehouse connecting with the pier. He removed the bushes and debris from the beach, thor-

oroughly drained the locality, leveled the ground, cleared the accumulated sea-weed from the sand of the shore, extended and improved the pier, and put everything in first-class order, until one of the roughest and most forbidding of spots became positively attractive. I have rarely seen so complete and pleasing a transformation. The Port La Gloria of to-day is a delightful place, neat and well kept, swept by balmy breezes from the sea, and commanding an entrancing view across the vari-colored waters of the beautiful bay to the island of Guajaba, with its picturesque mountains, and the other keys along the coast. There is good sea-bathing here, and excellent fishing not far away. A few miles down the coast the mouth of the Maximo river is reached, where one may shoot alligators to his heart's content, while along the shore of Guajaba Key the resplendent flamingo may be brought down by a hunter who is clever enough to get within range of the timid bird. Assistant Chief Engineer Neville was a good flamingo hunter, and we occasionally dined off the big bird at the officers' table.

One of the hardest workers in the colony was Jason L. Ratekin, who came from Omaha, Nebraska. He was a man of marked indi-

viduality, and though not overburdened with capital, was fertile in resources and full of energy and determination. At first he performed arduous work for the company in the transportation of baggage and freight from the port with the bullock team, and later went into business for himself as a contractor for the clearing and planting of land. He was enthusiastic and progressive. Among all the colonists there was none more public-spirited, and he demonstrated his kindness of heart on many occasions. Once when the bullock team was bringing in a sick woman and several small children, and the rough and wearisome journey was prolonged into the darkness of the night, he distinguished himself by carrying the ten-months-old baby nearly all the way in his arms and by breaking into a consignment of condensed milk to save it from starvation. Ratekin was a rough-looking fellow, but a more generous and kindly nature is seldom met with.

The first banquet in La Gloria was held on the evening of March 26, in honor of the fifty-second birthday of Col. Thomas H. Maginniss, superintendent of camp, who was about to return to his wife and eleven children in Philadelphia. M. T. Jones of Williamsport, Pa.,

was master of ceremonies, and the occasion was highly enjoyable. The banquet was served in a tent restaurant on Central avenue, and the guests numbered about twenty, several of whom were ladies. The table presented a very attractive appearance, and the menu included salads, sardines, salt beef, smoked herrings, fresh fish, bread, cake and *lime-o-nade*. Among the after-dinner speakers were Colonel Maginniss, General Van der Voort, S. N. Ware of Wyoming, Jesse B. Kimes, Rev. Dr. Gill, D. E. Lowell, M. A. C. Neff, H. O. Neville, John A. Connell, and James M. Adams. The banquet was voted a success by all present.

On Sunday, April 1, Colonel Maginniss and about twenty of the colonists left La Gloria for Nuevitas preparatory to sailing for the States. This was the largest number of colonists that had departed at one time since mid-winter, and their leaving caused some depression throughout the colony. This was quickly over, however, and new arrivals soon made up for the numerical loss. The Maginniss party included M. T. Jones of Pennsylvania and H. E. Mosher of New York state, who had been his assistants in the work of the camp, and Mrs. Whittle of Albany, N. Y., and Max

Neuber of Philadelphia, Pa., who had been the teachers of the day and evening schools. Mr. Neuber and some of the others expressed the intention of returning to La Gloria later in the year.

The departure of the score of colonists at this time was marked by a most melancholy incident, which was speedily followed by the first death in La Gloria. John F. Maxfield of Providence, R. I., a man past middle age, who had come to La Gloria on the first *Yarmouth* excursion, had been ill for several weeks with a complication of ailments. Although he had the watchful care and companionship of a friend from the same city, Capt. Joseph Chace, he became very much depressed and sadly homesick. When the Maginniss party was made up to return to the States, he believed himself sufficiently improved to accompany it, and braced up wonderfully for the effort. When the day arrived, he announced his intention of walking to the port, and set out to do so, but was quickly picked up and taken down in a wagon. At the pier he was overcome by exhaustion, and exhibited so much weakness that it was deemed unsafe to place him on board of either of the small and crowded sail-boats. It was feared he

would not survive the hardships and exposure of the journey to Nuevitas. The decision to leave him behind, although kindly meant, was a great blow to him, and was believed by some to have hastened his death, which took place the next morning. However this may be, it is improbable that he would have lived to reach his home in the States. Heart failure was the final cause of his death. He had good care at the port, but his extreme weakness could not be overcome. Mr. Maxfield was a quiet, unobtrusive man, and was held in high esteem throughout the colony. He was buried in a pleasant spot in the company's reserve, and his funeral was attended by almost the entire colony and some of the Cubans. The services were held out of doors in a beautiful glade, and were conducted by the Rev. Dr. Gill. It was a most impressive scene. This was the only death in La Gloria during the six months succeeding the arrival of the first colonists. This low rate of mortality was the more remarkable from the fact that a number of invalids came or were brought into the colony during the winter. One day there came in from the port a wagon bringing a woman who had been a paralytic for years, and her sick husband, who had been unable to sit up

for a long time. They were from Kansas, and were accompanied by grown children and friends. The colonists expected there would very soon be two deaths in La Gloria, but the sick man, who was a mere skeleton, improved steadily and in a few weeks was able to walk about the camp, while his paralytic wife was no worse and was considered by the family to be slightly better. Considering that the invalids were living in tents without expert care, the man's recovery was hardly less than marvelous.

On April 2, work on the corduroy road to the port, which had been suspended, was resumed under the capable supervision of D. E. Lowell. Mr. Lowell proved to be the best roadmaker who had taken a hand at the game up to that time, and, considering the little he had to do with, accomplished a great deal. His workmen were from among the colonists and he rarely had more than ten or twelve at a time, and usually less, but in five or six weeks he had done much for the betterment of the highway. No one realized better than Mr. Lowell that this was only a temporary road, but it was the best to be had at the time. Later in the year, a fine, permanent highway to the port was begun by

Chief Engineer Kelly, and when completed La Gloria's great drawback will be removed. Kelly's is a substantial, rock-ballasted road, twelve feet wide, and graded two feet above high-water mark. It will make La Gloria easy of access from the coast.



CHAPTER XIV.

THE FIRST BALL IN LA GLORIA.

MEANWHILE, the sale and allotment of plantations and town lots steadily continued, until on April 9, six months from the day the surveyors began their operations, about twelve thousand or fifteen thousand acres of land had been allotted, besides nine hundred and thirty-three city lots. Many of the lots had been cleared, and parts of some of the plantations. Quite an amount of planting, in the aggregate, had been done.

The survey corps and the colonists agreed that the semi-anniversary of the coming of the surveyors to La Gloria should be marked by a celebration, and the bold project of a grand ball was set on foot. When I first heard of it, I thought it was a joke, but when I saw a long list of committees conspicuously posted on Central avenue, and had been requested by "Albany" to announce the coming event at the regular meeting of the Pioneer Association, I realized that the talk had been serious and that Terpsichore had actually

gained a footing in La Gloria. I was authorized to announce that the ball would be in charge of a French dancing master, which was the fact, for Floor Manager Messier ("Albany") was a Frenchman by birth. The ball and the accompanying supper were free to all, but the women of the colony had been requested to contribute food—and most nobly they responded—while the men, particularly the surveyors, hustled for fruit, sugar, etc. It was a cheering sight when big Jack McCauley drove in from Mercedes with the mule team, bringing a whole barrel of oranges. These were some of the oranges which had been saved by Jack's "influence."

It was no small task to make the necessary preparations for the ball, and some of the committees were kept very busy. I was on the committee on music, and learned to my dismay, a few hours before the ball was to open, that Dan Goodman, the fiddler, had been attacked by stage fright and had declared that if he was to be the whole orchestra he would "hang up the fiddle and the bow." I interviewed Dan,—who was just as good a fellow as his name implies,—and found that he was really suffering from Pennsylvania modesty. Accordingly it devolved on me to



build up an orchestra with Dan as a nucleus. I succeeded beyond my expectations. In a short time I had secured the musical services of Ed. Ford, Mr. and Mrs. Spiker, and others. The evening came, and like Jerry Rusk, they "seen their duty and done it." And it may further be said that they "done it" very well.

It was decided to hold the ball in a large canvas-covered structure which had formerly been used as a restaurant kitchen and storehouse. There was only a dirt floor, and hence the matter of a temporary flooring became a problem. Boards were almost an unknown luxury in La Gloria at that time, but a few were picked up about the camp, and the Rev. Dr. Gill kindly loaned the flooring of his tent for the evening. Even then, only so much of the ballroom floor was boarded as was actually used for dancing. It is not too much to say that the ballroom was elaborately decorated. High overhead were fastened graceful and beautiful palm leaves, a dozen feet or more in length, and there were green wreathes and initial letters flecked with flowers and bright red berries. Men, women, and children joined efforts to make the interior of the tent a bower of tropical beauty. The effect was most pleasing.

Such decorations in the Northern states would doubtless have cost a large sum of money. Here they cost only a little time and labor. I wish I could say that the ballroom was brilliantly lighted, but the gas and electric light plants were as yet unplanted, and we had to depend on kerosene lanterns suspended from the roof. However, as most of us had been using only candles for illumination, the lantern light seemed very good. No one thought of complaining that it was dark.

I shall not be able to describe the Grand Ball in all its wondrous details, but only to make brief mention of a few of the features which particularly impressed me. I remember that as the people gathered together we had great difficulty in recognizing each other. We had thought we were all well acquainted, but that was before the men and women had gone down into the bottom of their trunks and fished out their good clothes. The transformation, particularly in some of the men, was paralyzing, and after we had identified the individuals inside of the clothes, many of us forgot our company manners and opened our mouths wide in astonishment. Men who had been accustomed to wear, seven days in

each week, a careless outing costume, or old, cheap clothes of cotton or woolen material, or mayhap nothing more than shirt and overalls, had suddenly blossomed out in well-fitting black suits, set off by cuffs, high collars, and silk ties. It was a dazzling sight for La Gloria. The men had been very negligent of their dress; scarcely one had brought his valet with him to Cuba! There may even have been a few dress suits at the ball, and I will not make oath that some of the women were not in décolleté gowns; to be entirely safe, however, I will not swear that they were. The women looked very well and so did the men; all were a credit to an American colony.

Mr. J. A. Messier ("Albany"), the floor manager and master of ceremonies, was attired in neat and conventional dress, and performed his duties gracefully and well. The grand march was led by General Van der Voort and Mrs. Dan Goodman, followed by Chief Engineer Kelly with a daughter of Señor Rivas. I do not find among my possessions a dance order, and hence can give no description of it; and I apprehend that the others present would have no better success. But there was dancing, and a lot of it.



INTERIOR GEN. VAN DER VOORT'S HOUSE. (April, 1900.)

Furthermore, it was much enjoyed, both by the participants and the spectators. About the middle of the evening some specialties were introduced. Chief Engineer Kelly performed a clog dance successfully, turning a handspring at the end, and Architect Neff executed an eccentric French dance with a skill and activity that brought down the house. There was also good clog dancing by some of the younger men.

The ball was attended by nearly the entire colony. This was made manifest when we lined up for supper, which was served across the street. The procession to the tables numbered one hundred and forty persons by actual count. The tables were set under shelter tents, and were beautifully decorated and loaded with food. There were meats, fish, salads, puddings, cakes, and a wonderful variety of pies, in which the guava was conspicuous. Coffee and fruits were also much in evidence. Never before had La Gloria seen such a spread. On this occasion the women of the colony achieved a well-merited reputation for culinary skill and resourcefulness. Except for a few enthusiasts, who went back to the ballroom for more dancing, the supper wound up the evening's

festivities. The semi-anniversary had been properly celebrated, and the first ball in La Gloria had proved successful beyond anticipation. April 9, 1900, may be set down as a red letter day in the history of the colony.

Speaking of the ball and its orchestra calls to mind the music in the camp in the early days of the colony. There was not much. Occasionally a violin was heard; and more often, perhaps, a guitar or mandolin. But the most persistent musician was a cornet player, who for a time was heard regularly every night from one end of the camp. His wind was good, but his repertoire small. He knew "Home, Sweet Home" from attic to cellar, and his chief object in life seemed to be to make others as familiar with it as himself. He played little else, and the melting notes of John Howard Payne's masterpiece floated through the quiet camp hour after hour, night after night. Finally, the colonists visited him and told him gently but firmly that he must stop playing that piece so much; it was making them all homesick. Not long after the cornet player disappeared. I think there was no foul play. Probably he had simply betaken himself to home, sweet home.

There were many good singers in camp. Some of them met regularly once or twice a week and sang gospel hymns. These formed the choir at the Sunday services. There was another group of vocalists, equally excellent in its way, which confined itself to rendering popular songs. Some of the latter, who dwelt and had their "sings" near my tent, would have done credit to the vaudeville stage. They were known as the "Kansas crowd." It gave me, a native of the Granite state, great satisfaction to hear these Kansas people singing with spirit and good expression "My Old New Hampshire Home." I was pleased to regard it as a Western tribute to New Hampshire as the place of the ideal home.

CHAPTER XV.

A WALKING TRIP TO PUERTO PRINCIPE.

IT was on the day after the Grand Ball, Tuesday, April 10, that a party of us started on a walking trip to the city of Puerto Principe, forty-five miles away. My companions, who, like myself, were all colonists, were Jeff D. Franklin of Florida, David Murphy of New Jersey, A. H. Carpenter of Massachusetts, and a Mr. Crosby of Tennessee. Mr. Crosby was a man of middle age; the rest of us were younger, Carpenter being a mere youth of perhaps eighteen. All were good walkers. The start was made at about 8:30 in the morning. The day was pleasant and balmy, but not excessively warm. The trail was now in good condition, and the walking would have been altogether agreeable had it not been for the packs upon our shoulders. We carried hammocks, blankets, and such food as bread, crackers, sardines, bacon, and coffee. One of the party had a frying-pan slung across his back. Our loads were not

actually heavy, but they seemed so after we had walked a few miles.

Our course lay to the southwest, through the deserted plantation of Mercedes, where we stopped an hour to eat oranges and chat with the colonists at work there. Resuming our march, we soon passed an inhabited Cuban shack near an abandoned sugar mill, stopping a few minutes to investigate a small banana patch near the road. We had been here before and knew the owner. A mile further on we reached another occupied shack, and called to get a drink of agua (water). We were hospitably received in the open front of the casa (house) and given heavy, straight-backed, leather-bottomed chairs of an antique pattern. The agua furnished was rain water which had been stored in a cistern, and had at least the virtue of being wet. There were at home an old man, a very fleshy elderly woman, and two rather good-looking girls, the appearance and dress of one of whom indicated that she was a visitor. This was about the only shack we saw where there were no young children in evidence. We tarried but a few minutes. After making inquiries about the road, as we did at almost every house, we continued on our way.

For the next three or four miles we had a good hard trail through the woods, but saw neither habitation nor opening. Shortly after noon we emerged from the woods into an open space, where, on slightly elevated ground, stood two shacks. We had been here before and knew the man who occupied one of them. There was no land under cultivation in sight, and the only fruit a custard apple tree and a few mangoes. There were a good many pigs roaming about, and the shack we entered contained several small children. Our Cuban friend seemed glad to see us; his wife brought us water to drink, and we were invited to sit down. Our social call would have been more satisfactory if we had known more Spanish, or our host had spoken English. We made but a brief stay, and on departing asked the Cuban to point out to us the road to Puerto Principe. Since leaving the woods we had seen no road or trail of any sort. He took us around his house and accompanied us for some distance, finally pointing out an indistinct trail across high savanna land which he said was the right one. This path, which could hardly be seen, was the "road" from the coast to the third largest city in Cuba, only about thirty

miles away! Such are Cuban roads. At times you can only guess whether you are in a road or out of it.

What lay before us was now entirely unfamiliar. At about one o'clock we halted by the side of the trail for a midday rest and lunch. We were a dozen miles from La Gloria, and about an equal distance from the Cubitas mountains, through which we were to pass. An hour later we took up the march again. We soon entered the woods and found a smooth, firm trail over the red earth. We passed through miles of timber, of a fine, straight growth. In the thick woods but few royal palms were seen, but in the more open country we saw some magnificent groves of them. During the afternoon we passed only two or three shacks, but as we approached the Cubitas mountains the few habitations and their surroundings improved in character. The houses continued to be palm-thatched, but they were more commodious and surrounded by gardens in which were a few orange and banana trees, and other fruits and vegetables. Some of the places were quite pretty. Occasionally we would see cleared land that had once been cultivated, but no growing crops of any amount. This part of

the country had been agriculturally dead since the 'Ten Years' War. How the natives live, I know not, but it is safe to say that they do not live well. They raise boniatos and cassava, a little fruit, and keep a few pigs. Often their chief supply of meat is derived from the wild hogs which they shoot. And yet these Cubans were living on some of the best land in the world.

Late in the afternoon, after walking for a mile or more along a good road bordered by the ornamental but worthless jack-pineapple plant, we came to a wide gateway opening into an avenue lined with cocoanut palms and leading up to a couple of well-made Cuban shacks. The houses stood at the front of quite a large garden of fruit trees. We called at one of the shacks, which proved to be well populated. An elderly man, large for a Cuban and well-built, came forward to greet us and was inclined to be sociable. His shirt appeared to be in the wash, but this fact did not seem to embarrass him any; he still had his trousers. Of a younger man we bought a few pounds of boniatos (sweet potatoes) and after some urging persuaded him to go out and get some green cocoanuts for us from the trees. He sent his little boy of about

twelve years of age up the tree to hack off a bunch of the nuts with his machete. We drank the copious supply of milk with great satisfaction; there is no more refreshing drink in all Cuba. As the boy had done all the work, we designedly withheld our silver until he had come down the tree and we could place it in his hands. We wondered if he would be allowed to keep it. Climbing the smooth trunk of a cocoanut tree is no easy task.

We camped that night among the trees by the side of the road a quarter of a mile further on. We had made twenty miles for the day, and were now on high ground near the base of the Cubitas mountains. The rise had been so very gradual that we had not noticed that we were ascending. The trunks of all the trees around us were stained for a short distance from the ground with the red of the soil, caused, as we believed, by the wild hogs rubbing up against them. Our supper of fried boniatos and bacon was skilfully cooked by Jeff Franklin, who used the hollow trunk of a royal palm, which had fallen and been split, for an oven. For drink we had cocoanut milk. By the vigorous use of Dave Murphy's machete we cleared away the underbrush so

that we could swing our hammocks among the small trees. Franklin had no hammock, but slept under a blanket on a rubber coat spread on the ground. The night was comfortably warm and brilliantly clear. It was delightful to lie in our hammocks and gaze up through the trees at the beautiful star-lit sky. There were mosquitoes, of course, but they did not trouble us much, and we all slept well.

We were up early the next morning, a perfect day, and after eating a substantial breakfast proceeded on our journey. We felt little exhaustion from the long walk of the preceding day, but I was a sad cripple from sore feet. I had on a pair of Cuban shoes which were a little too short for me (although they were No. 40) and my toes were fearfully blistered and bruised. There was nothing to do, however, but go forward as best I could, so I limped painfully along behind my companions, keenly conscious that Josh Billings was a true philosopher when he said that "tite boots" made a man forget all his other troubles.

A fraction of a mile beyond our camping place we discovered a well-kept shack ensconced in cosy grounds amid palms, fruit

trees, and flowering shrubs. It was one of the prettiest scenes we saw. We called for water, politely greeted the woman who served us with our best pronunciation of "buenos dias," and, murmuring our "gracias," went our way with some regrets at leaving so pleasant a spot. A mile or two further on we came to a distinct fork in the road. One way lay nearly straight ahead, the other bore off to the right. While we were debating which trail to take, a horseman fortunately came along, the first person we had seen on the road that day and the second since leaving Mercedes on the preceding forenoon. He told us to go to the right, and we were soon in the foothills of the mountains.

It was here that we found a deserted shack behind which was a cleared space in the woods of several acres. On this little plantation grew bananas, cocoanuts, cassava, boniatos, and other vegetables. As it was in the Cubitas mountains near this spot that the Cuban insurrectionists had what they called their independent civil government for some time prior to the intervention of the United States, and secreted their cattle and raised fruit and vegetables to supply food for the "Army of Liberation," we guessed that this

might be one of the places then put under cultivation. It certainly had had very little recent care.

After journeying past some chalk-white cliffs, which we examined with interest, we entered the mountain pass which we supposed would take us through the town or village of Cubitas, the one-time Cuban capital. The way was somewhat rough and rugged, but not very steep. The mountains were covered with trees and we had no extended view in any direction. All at once, at about 10:30 a. m., we suddenly and unexpectedly emerged from the pass, when the shut-in forest view changed to a broad and sweeping prospect into the interior of Cuba. What we looked down upon was an immense savanna, stretching twenty miles to the front, and perhaps more on either hand, broken in the distance on all sides by hills and lofty mountains. It was a beautiful sight, particularly for us who had been shut in by the forest most of the time for months. The savanna was dry, but in places showed bright green stretches that were restful to the eye. It was dotted with thousands of small palm trees, which were highly ornamental. We could not see Puerto Principe, nor did we catch sight of it until

within three miles of the city. There was no town or village in sight, and not even a shack, occupied or unoccupied. The view embraced one vast plain, formerly used for grazing purposes, but now wholly neglected and deserted. We did not then know that we were to walk seventeen miles across this savanna before seeing a single habitation of any sort.

We had seen nothing of the village of Cubitas, and concluded that we had taken the wrong pass. We were afterwards told that Cubitas consisted of a single shack which had been used as a canteen. Whether the Cuban government occupied this canteen, or one of the caves which are said to exist in these mountains, I cannot say. The revolutionary government, being always a movable affair, was never easy to locate. It was, however, secure from harm in these mountains. We noticed later that the natives seemed to regard all the scattered houses within a radius of half a dozen miles from this part of the mountains as forming Cubitas. The post-office must have been up a tree.

After a brief rest on the south slope of the mountains, we resumed our march, a wearisome one for all of us and exceedingly pain-

ful to me with my disabled feet. They seemed even sorer after a halt. My ankles were now very lame from unnaturally favoring my pinched toes. The midday sun was hot, and we suffered a good deal from thirst. There were no longer any houses where we could procure water. We had not seen a stream of any sort in the last twenty miles. I staggered along as best I could, a straggler behind my companions. A little after noon we came suddenly upon two or three little water holes directly in our path. It seemed like an oasis in the desert. We could not see where the water came from nor where it went, but it was clear and good, and we were duly thankful. We ate dinner here under a small palm tree, and enjoyed a siesta for an hour.

In the afternoon we met only one person, a Cuban produce pedler on horseback. He treated those who cared for liquor out of a big black bottle. That afternoon's tramp will linger long in our memories. I thought we should never get across that seemingly endless savanna. At last, when it was near six o'clock, we reached an old deserted open shack which stood on the plain not far from the trail. Here we spent the night, cooking

our supper and procuring in a near-by well tolerably good water, notwithstanding the dirty scum on top of it. We were within four miles of Puerto Principe, and my ears were delighted that evening with a sound which I had not heard in more than three months—the whistle of a locomotive. Our night was somewhat disturbed by rats, fleas, and mosquitoes, but we were too tired not to sleep a good part of it. The breeze across the savanna was gentle and soothing.

The next morning we walked into the time-scarred city of Puerto Principe—that is, the others walked and I hobbled. If possible, my feet were worse than ever. In the outskirts, our party divided, Franklin, Murphy, and Carpenter branching off to the left to go to the camp of the Eighth U. S. Cavalry two miles east of the city near the railroad track, and Crosby and I going directly into the heart of the town in search of a hotel. We had a long walk through the narrow and roughly paved streets before we found one. There is no denying that we were a tough-looking pair of tramps. We were unshaven and none too clean. Our clothes were worn and frayed, and soiled with mud and dust. We were bent with the

packs upon our shoulders, and walked with very pronounced limps. Everywhere we were recognized as "Americanos," although it seemed to me we looked more like Italian organ-grinders. To the day of my death I shall never cease to be grateful to the people of Puerto Principe for the admirable courtesy and good manners exhibited to us. They did not stone nor jeer us; they did not even openly stare at the odd spectacle we presented. Even the children did not laugh at us, and the dogs kindly refrained from barking at our heels. At all times during our stay of several days we were treated with perfect courtesy and a respectful consideration which our personal appearance scarcely warranted and certainly did not invite. The Spaniards and Cubans seem to associate even the roughest dressed American with money and good-nature. The humbler children would gather about us, pleading, "Americano, gimme a centavo!" while little tots of four years would say in good English and the sweetest of voices, "Good-by, my frien'!" It was the soldiers who had taught them this. Their parents rarely spoke any English whatever.

We stayed at the Gran Hotel, said by some

to be the best in the city. It was none too good, but not bad as Cuban hotels run. The terms were moderate, \$1.50 per day, for two meals and lodging. A third meal could not be obtained for love nor money. I bought mine at street stands or in a café. Not a word of English was spoken at this hotel.

I cannot describe Puerto Principe at any length. It is an old Spanish city in architecture and customs, and might well have been transplanted from mediæval Spain. As a matter of fact, it was moved here centuries ago from the north coast of Cuba, near the present site of Nuevitas, the change being made to escape the incursions of pirates. It has a population of about forty-seven thousand, and is the third largest city in Cuba, and the most populous inland town. Many of the residents are wealthy and aristocratic, and the people, generally speaking, are fine looking and very well dressed. I several times visited the chief plaza, which had lately taken the new name of Agramonte, and watched with interest the handsome men and beautiful señoritas who promenaded there. I was told that late in the afternoon and early in the evening the young people of the best families in the city walked in the



AGRAMONTE PLAZA, PUERTO PRINCIPLE, CUBA.
Photograph by V. K. Van De Venter, Jan. 28, 1900.

plaza. They were certainly elegantly dressed and most decorous in behavior. The plaza was very pretty, with its royal palms and ornamental flower beds. It was flanked by one of the several ancient Catholic churches in the city. While in Puerto Principe I was in receipt of unexpected courtesies from Mr. C. Hugo Drake, the American lawyer alluded to in an earlier chapter of this book.

After spending four delightful days in Puerto Principe, I took the train to Las Minas, twenty miles to the eastward. There I joined my companions, who had preceded me by twenty-four hours. Here we boarded the private cane train of Bernabe Sanchez and rode to Señor Sanchez' great sugar mill at Senado, six miles away. Señor Sanchez has a pleasant residence here, surrounded by fruit trees and shrubs. We saw ripe strawberries growing in his garden. Scores of Cuban shacks in the vicinity house his workmen and their families. We went all over his immense, well-appointed sugar mill, then in operation, and in the early afternoon rode on the flat cars of the cane train through his extensive plantation for nine miles, the land on either side of the track for all this distance being utilized for the growing of sugar cane.

The end of the track left us about eighteen miles from La Gloria. We set out to walk home, but late in the afternoon the party accidentally divided and both divisions got lost. Murphy and I spent an uncomfortable night in the thick, damp woods, and taking up the tramp early the next morning, found ourselves, two or three hours later, at the exact point near the end of Sanchez' plantation where we had begun our walk the afternoon before. We had walked about fifteen miles and got back to our starting point without realizing that we had deviated from the main trail. Stranger yet, the other division of the party had done exactly the same thing, but had reached this spot late the night before and was now half way to La Gloria.

Murphy and I made a new start, and after getting off the track once or twice, finally reached the Maximo river, crossed it on a tree, and got into La Gloria at 5:30 that afternoon, nearly worn out and looking like wild men. I had had nothing to eat for forty-eight hours save two cookies, one cracker, and half a sweet potato.

CHAPTER XVI.

IN AND AROUND LA GLORIA.

A VERY good Book that I wot of contains an Apocrypha. This will have no Apocrypha, but I will here relate an incident which did not come under my personal observation, but which was told of by my ordinarily veracious friend, Colonel Maginniss. At one time during the winter, Colonel Maginniss and his assistants had for three days been searching for a company horse that was lost, when a man named Ramsden came to the colonel's tent and reported that there was a horse hanging in the woods not far away. The colonel and Mr. Jones went to the spot and found a large white horse, that had weighed twelve hundred pounds, dead in the thicket, hanging by the neck. No formal inquest was held, but it was the colonel's theory that this American-born horse could not live on Cuban grass, and had deliberately hanged himself. A somewhat similar case I was personally cognizant of. A sick horse was reported drowning in a shallow pond

near the camp. Colonel Maginniss went to the scene on a Cuban pony, with a dozen colonists, and after a hard struggle the horse was dragged one hundred yards away from the mud and water, and left on dry land. Early the next morning it was discovered that the horse had worked his way back into the pond and drowned himself. Was this a case of animal suicide? It may be said that none of the colonists ever resorted to this desperate expedient, even when the sugar gave out.

Colonel Maginniss was "a master hand in sickness." An English woman who came to the colony was very ill, and blood poisoning set in. The colonel's experience as a family man was now of service. He had the woman removed to a large tent, attended her personally and looked after the children, calling four or five times daily, and administering such remedies as he had. The woman recovered, and gratefully expressed the belief that the colonel had saved her life.

Near the end of April there was a sudden and surprising rise of water along Central avenue between La Gloria and the port. One afternoon Mr. Lowell and his men at work upon the road noticed that the water was ris-

ing in the creeks and ditches along the way. This was a surprising discovery, inasmuch as there had been no rain of any account. The water continued to rise rapidly, and when the men left off work late in the afternoon it was several feet higher than it had been at noon. It came up steadily through the night, so that pedestrians to the port the next morning found the water even with the new road all along and over it where the creeks came in. Further down toward the port, the savanna was flooded in places to a depth of one or two feet. Among the pedestrians that morning were several colonists who were on their way home to the States, and who, singularly enough, were obliged to walk out of La Gloria through mud and water very much as they had walked in several months before, although between the two periods there had been for a long time a good dry road.

It was that morning that we, in the camp, heard a peculiar rushing sound which we at first mistook for water sweeping through the woods. On going down the road to investigate, however, we found that the noise was the deafening chorus of millions of little frogs—some contended that they were tree toads—which had come in with the flood or with the

rain which fell in the night. Never before had I seen such a sight. The frogs were everywhere, on logs, stumps, in the water, and along the road; bits of earth jutting out of the water would be covered with them. They were all of one color—as yellow as sulphur—and appeared to be very unhappy. I saw large stumps so covered with these frogs, or toads, as to become pyramids of yellow. Whether frogs or toads, they seemed averse to getting wet and were all seeking dry places. I saw a snake about two feet long, who had filled himself up with them from head to tail, floating lazily on the surface of the water. No less than five of the yellowbacks had climbed up on his head and neck, and he had only energy enough left to clasp his jaws loosely upon one of them and then let go. The snake seemed nearly dead from over-eating. The frogs disappeared in a day or two as suddenly as they had come.

At the time of this small-sized flood, a party of surveyors were camped upon the savanna near Central avenue and about a mile from the port. Their camp was high enough to escape the water, but they were pretty well surrounded by it. One of the men, finding deep water running in the road, went a-fish-



ing there and boasted that he had caught fish in Central avenue ! The water soon subsided, and the generally accepted explanation of the sudden flood was that it had been caused by the overflow of the Maximo, and that there had been heavy rains, or a cloudburst, twelve or fifteen miles away.

April was a warm month, but by no means an uncomfortable one. The lowest temperature recorded was 67° ; the highest, 94° . The weather was delightful ; the breezes were fresh and fragrant ; flowers were blossoming everywhere ; and the honey bees of this incomparable bee country were happy and industrious. So, too, were the colonists. The work of the latter was well advanced by the first of May, or, at least, that of some of them. As an example of industry, D. Siefert is worthy of mention. Mr. Siefert hailed from British Columbia and came to La Gloria on the first *Yarmouth*. On the voyage down he was somewhat disturbed over the question of getting his deed, but once in La Gloria, he put his apprehensions behind him, secured his allotment of a five-acre plantation, indulged in no more vain questionings and waited for no further developments, but each morning shouldered his axe and attacked the



DR. PEIRCE'S PINEAPPLE PATCH.

trees on his land. He kept up the battle for months, rarely missing a day's work. The result was that by May 1, Mr. Siefert, alone and unaided, had cleared his five acres of timber land, burned it over, and was ready for planting. Other colonists worked hard and effectually in the forest, but this was the best single-handed performance that came under my notice.

Another enterprising and highly intelligent colonist was Max Neuber of Philadelphia, who has been before alluded to as one of the teachers in the evening school. Mr. Neuber pushed the work upon his land, doing much of it himself. Early and late his friends would find him chopping, digging, and planting. When he left for the States in April he had five boxes packed with the products of his plantation, such as lemons, limes, potatoes, and specimens of mahogany and other valuable woods.

A group of industrious workers, most of whom had earlier been attached to the survey corps, were in May located and well settled in a place which they called Mountain View. This was a partially open tract four or five miles west of La Gloria and about a mile from Mercedes. Here the young men pitched

their tents and swung their hammocks, confidently claiming that they had the best spot in all the country round. From here the Cubitas mountains could be plainly seen; hence the name of Mountain View. A person following the rough trail from La Gloria to Mercedes might have seen on a tree at the left, shortly before reaching the latter place, a shingle bearing the inscription, "Change Cars for Mountain View." If he should choose to take the narrow, rough, and crooked trail to the left through the woods, he would ere long come out into the open and probably see Smith Everett, formerly of Lenawee county, Michigan, lying in his hammock watching his banana trees grow.

I have before mentioned the irregularity and infrequency of the mails. The remedy was slow in coming. The chief cause of the irregularity was The Sangjai, which, though designed to be an aid to navigation, was often a great hindrance to it. The Sangjai was a very narrow and very shallow channel, partly natural and partly artificial, through what had once been the Sabinal peninsula. The artificial and difficult part of the channel known as The Sangjai was about half way between La Gloria and Nuevitas. It had to

be used in following the short or "inside" water course. This was the route over which went our mail in a small sailboat. The Sangjai at one point was so shallow that it contained only a few inches of water at low tide and less than two feet when the tide was high. It was a hard place to get through at best, and many a passenger on craft which went this way had to get out and walk, and help push the boat besides! Boats always had to be pushed or poled through The Sangjai. If the winds permitted the sailboat to reach this aggravating channel at the right time, there was no great delay; but otherwise, the boat would be held up for ten or twelve hours. This was altogether unpleasant, especially as the mosquitoes and jejines claimed The Sangjai (pronounced Sanghi, or corruptly, Shanghi) for their own. The mail, like everything else, had to await the will of the waters, or, perhaps I should say, the convenience of the moon. The Sangjai played a very important part in the early history of La Gloria.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE COLONY AT THE END OF THE FIRST YEAR.

My pen must glide rapidly over the events of the summer and early fall. The sawmill, which had been so long delayed and so often promised as to become a standing joke in the colony, finally reached La Gloria from Nuevitas, via the port, on May 30. Nothing was more needed; its non-arrival had delayed both building operations and the clearing of land. A few weeks later the mill was in operation, to the great joy of the colonists. In June the construction of a pole tramway from La Gloria to a point on the bay between the port and the Palota landing was begun. This was completed on August 14, and transportation operations were at once inaugurated. The new landing place was named Newport. On July 16 the building of a substantial and permanent highway from La Gloria to the port was commenced under the supervision of Chief Engineer Kelly, and before October 1 the work was well advanced. The chosen route was along Central avenue.

The colonists celebrated the Fourth of July with an appropriate entertainment. On July 3 the colony witnessed a tragedy in the killing of a youth named Eugene Head by a stone thrown by a young Spanish boy. The coroner's jury decided that young Head's death was accidental. Both boys were residents of La Gloria. The fifth of July was marked by the death of a valued colonist, Mr. F. H. Bosworth, a veteran of the Civil War. Mr. Bosworth was seventy-one years old, and had not been in rugged health for a long time. He was an enterprising colonist, and performed a great deal of work for a man of his years and enfeebled physical condition. His wife, also a resident of La Gloria, survived him. The general health of the colony through the summer was excellent. There was but little rain, and the weather was delightful beyond all expectation. The temperature ordinarily ranged from about 78° to 90°, and never exceeded 94°. The colonists came to believe that the summer season was even more agreeable than the winter. It was heartily voted that Cuba was a good all-the-year-round country.

The end of the first year of the colony—reckoning from October 9, 1899, when the



SCENE ON LAGUNA GRANDE.

surveyors began operations—saw much progress toward extensive colonization, not in La Gloria alone, but also in the surrounding country. The Cuban Colonization Company, organized with Dr. W. P. Peirce of Hoopes-ton, Ill., as president and treasurer, and W. G. Spiker of Cleveland, Ohio, as vice-president and general manager, had acquired two excellent tracts of land, known as Laguna Grande and Rincon Grande, to the eastward of the La Gloria property. These are being subdivided and sold to colonists in small holdings. In the Rincon Grande tract, on the bay front, the city of Columbia is being laid out, and doubtless will soon be settled by thrifty and progressive colonists from the United States. It is claimed that this is the exact spot where Columbus landed in 1492, and it certainly does answer well the historical description. Other colonists had purchased the Canasi tract, southwest of La Gloria and adjoining the Caridad property, and Hon. Peter E. Park was said to have secured an option on the Palota tract. It is understood that these two tracts are to be divided up and sold to colonists. The Caridad tract, adjoining La Gloria on the south, had passed into the hands of Mr. O. N.

Lumbert of New York, and still other tracts in the neighborhood were being negotiated for by Americans. Judging from the progress of this first year in colonization, there will soon be more Americans in this region than Cubans.

The nearest Cuban village to La Gloria is Guanaja (pronounced Wan-ah-ha) twelve miles to the northwest, and six or seven miles from Mercedes. Before the Ten Years' War Guanaja was a port of some importance, and the village is said to have embraced one hundred and eighty houses. But the town and surrounding country suffered severely in the long war, and somewhat in the later conflict. Now Guanaja consists of one rude wooden building, used as a store, and a dozen shacks stretched along the bay front close to the water, with a few scattered palm houses further back from the shore. The situation is rather picturesque, commanding a beautiful view across the brilliant-hued water to Cayo Romano, and the surrounding country is pleasant and might be made highly productive. The La Gloria colonists sometimes patronized the Guanaja store, and found the proprietor accommodating and reasonable in his prices. In the country between La Gloria

and Guanaja we would often meet members of the Rural Guard, in groups of two or three. They were fine-looking mounted Cubans, selected by the American military government from among the best of the late followers of Gomez, Garcia, and Maceo to patrol the country and preserve the peace. They frequently visited us at La Gloria, and made a favorable impression.

The La Gloria colony at the close of its first year had several newly formed organizations in a flourishing condition. Prominent among these was the La Gloria Colony Transportation Company, which owned and operated the pole tramway to the bay. Its officers were: J. C. Kelly, president; D. E. Lowell, first vice-president and general manager; W. A. Merrow, second vice-president; M. A. Custer Neff, chief engineer; R. G. Barner, secretary; William I. Gill, treasurer; H. W. O. Margary, counsel; and John Latham, E. F. Rutherford, D. W. Clifton, R. H. Ford, W. M. Carson, J. A. Messier, directors. The La Gloria Colony Telephone Company, organized to construct and operate a telephone line to the bay, was officered as follows: J. C. Kelly, president; F. E. Kezar, vice-president and general manager; J. R. P. de

les Derniers, secretary ; S. M. Van der Voort, chief engineer and director ; J. A. Connell, director. The La Gloria Colony Cemetery Association had the following officers : J. C. Kelly, M. A. C. Neff, D. E. Lowell, trustees ; J. C. Kelly, president ; H. W. O. Margary, vice-president ; E. L. Ellis, treasurer ; A. B. Chambers, secretary ; Rev. W. A. Nicholas, general manager ; F. E. Kezar, J. C. Francis, S. L. Benham, Mrs. W. A. Nicholas, Mrs. John Lind, directors. The Cuban Land and Steamship Company donated ten acres of land for a cemetery. The La Gloria Horticultural Society had about thirty members, with officers as follows : H. W. O. Margary, president ; A. W. Provo, vice-president ; R. G. Barner, secretary ; Smith Everett, treasurer. The La Prima Literary Society also had something like thirty members, and these officers : H. W. O. Margary, chairman ; A. W. Provo, vice-chairman ; R. H. Ford, secretary ; Smith Everett, treasurer. The two last named societies jointly purchased a town lot, and propose to erect at some future time a building for a hall, reading-room, etc.

The colony's first anniversary found improvements marching steadily, if not rapidly,

on. The sawmill, already alluded to, was busily at work ; Olson's shingle mill was completed ; the two-story frame building on Central avenue to be used as post-office, dwelling, etc., was done, as were numerous other wooden houses occupied as stores or residences ; there were half a dozen well-stocked stores doing business, and several restaurants and bakeries. Many buildings were in process of construction, and much clearing and planting going on. Choice fruit trees were being imported, as well as cattle, mules, swine, and poultry. The colonists were subsisting in part upon vegetables and pineapples of their own raising, and looking confidently forward to exporting products of this character in the near future.

Fruit growing was the most popular industry among the colonists, but there were those who were looking into the subjects of sugar, coffee, tobacco, cacao, rubber, lumber, cattle raising, etc. The outlook for all such enterprises seemed highly promising. Urgent needs of La Gloria are a canning factory and an establishment for the manufacture of furniture ; these industries should flourish from the start.

The enthusiasm of the colonists was unbounded ; they were filled and thrilled with

delight over their new home in the tropics. The climate was glorious, the air refreshing and soothing, the country picturesque and healthful, the soil fertile and productive. Not for a moment did they doubt that, after a few short years of slight hardship and trifling deprivations, a life of luxurious comfort lay before them. A fortune or a competence seemed certain to come to every man who would work and wait for it, and in all La Gloria there was hardly a person to be found who would willingly blot from his memory his interesting experiences while PIONEERING IN CUBA.

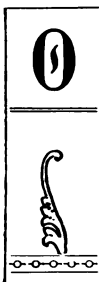


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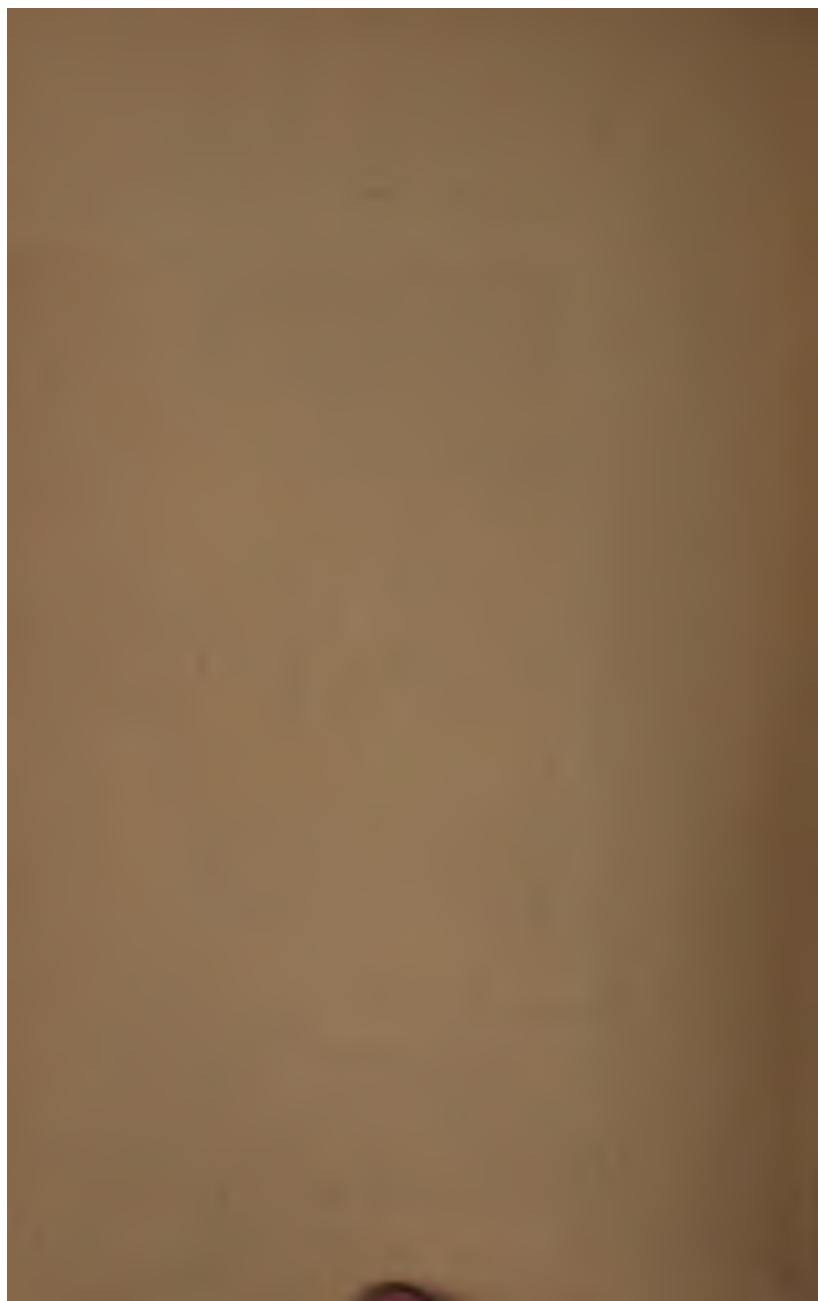
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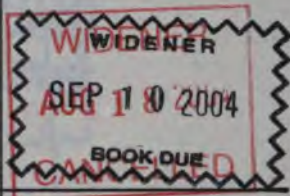


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